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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes issues facing New Zealand's modern adult literacy movement and places it in the context of the rapidly changing skill demands of the 21st century. Part I introduces political, economic, and social issues facing New Zealand. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the issues and structures that create the current climate. Part II provides a history of adult literacy in New Zealand. Chapter 2 defines literacy for the 21st century; identifies how literate New Zealanders are, and considers literacy needs by industry. Chapter 3 provides a brief history of New Zealand's literacy movement, describes emergence of workplace literacy, and discusses theoretical underpinnings Freirean and competency-based models. Chapter 4 addresses national leadership and provision of services. Four case studies are presented in a two-page profile with this basic information: type of program; cost; goal; types of services; work-related outcomes; number of students; student selection; structure; curriculum; learner profile; funding source; reason for literacy program; institutional profile; other factors that contribute to success; and student suggestions. A more detailed exploration follows of a series of questions on three themes: motivation, barriers, and benefits. Part III includes recommendations for a long-term, comprehensive, coordinated adult literacy strategy in Chapter 5, with implications for the United States in Chapter 6. Appendixes include the National Literacy Act: Public Law 102-73, and case study interview questions. (Contains 93 references, 7 tables, and 6 figures.) (YLB)

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Changing skills for a changing world: Recommendations for adult literacy policy in Aotearoa / New Zealand

by
Alice H. Johnson

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Occasional Paper 2000/2

October 2000

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Changing skills for a changing world: Recommendations for adult literacy policy in Aotearoa / New Zealand

A report by
Alice H. Johnson

With funding from the Ian Axford (New Zealand) Fellowships in Public Policy

Occasional Paper 2000/2
October 2000

Abstract:

This report was researched and written under the sponsorship of the Ian Axford (New Zealand) Fellowships in Public Policy. It summarises major issues facing New Zealand's modern adult literacy movement and places it in the context of the rapidly changing skill demands of the 21st Century. In addition to an overview of the current adult literacy system and four new case studies, the pages that follow include recommendations for a long-term, comprehensive, co-ordinated adult literacy strategy – an overdue necessity in light of recent economic and technological changes.

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ABSTRACT

This report was researched and written under the sponsorship of the Ian Axford (New Zealand) Fellowships in Public Policy. It summarises major issues facing New Zealand's modern adult literacy movement and places it in the context of the rapidly changing skill demands of the 21st Century. In addition to an overview of the current adult literacy system and four new case studies, the pages that follow include recommendations for a long-term, comprehensive, co-ordinated adult literacy strategy – an overdue necessity in light of recent economic and technological changes.

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Due to its length, many readers will not have time to read this report cover-to-cover. Part I is written primarily for the U.S. audience, as an introduction to timely political, economic and social issues facing New Zealand. The New Zealand audience may wish to skip this section and begin with Part II. For readers with very limited time, the *Executive Summary*, *Chapter 4* and *Chapter 5* are recommended.

The New Zealand Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Jim Bolger announced the Ian Axford (New Zealand) Fellowships in Public Policy, on 4 July 1995. The Fellowships programme is named after Professor Sir Ian Axford, an eminent New Zealand astrophysicist. The fellowships are a joint public-private sector initiative and provide mid-career opportunities to outstanding American professionals to study, travel and gain practical experience in public policy in New Zealand. The fellowship programme complements the longstanding Harkness Fellowships programme, which is funded by The Commonwealth Fund of New York. Both programmes are administered by the New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation, which is primarily responsible for the administration of the Fulbright programme in New Zealand. The public and private sponsors of the Ian Axford New Zealand Fellowship in Public Policy funded this project.

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Alice Johnson is Senior Policy Analyst at the National Institute for Literacy in Washington, DC. In 1999, she directed Vice President Al Gore's Leadership Group on *21st Century Skills for 21st Century Jobs* project. Previously, she worked on education policy for Senator Paul Simon on the United States Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee's Subcommittee on Employment and Productivity.

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"Literacy is a powerful determinant of an individual's life chances and quality of life. The same holds true in the wider context of countries: Overall literacy has a demonstrable effect on the well-being of economies and societies...The rates of return to education and literacy... suggest that what countries, communities, employers and workers spend on literacy should be seen as investment with a long-term pay-off, rather than simply as a cost...Higher levels of literacy are needed now more than any time in the past. And the demand for literacy in the future can only increase."
-- Literacy for the Knowledge Society: Further Results from the International Adult Literacy Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the increasingly knowledge-based world of the 21st Century, adults need a solid foundation of essential skills more than ever before. A person's knowledge and skills have a profound impact on their lives at home, in their community and on the job. In the workplace in particular, expectations of what people need to know and be able to do are continually increasing across occupations – and the stakes have never been higher for those with low skills. Gone are the days when one could manage a sheep station or earn a good living from manual labour without regular use of reading, writing and numeracy skills. To survive and prosper in a world of rapid change, adults need to continuously improve their knowledge and skills through a lifetime of learning.

Recognising the importance of increasing its investment in this area, the New Zealand government initiated an array of major education and training reforms in the early 1990s. The cornerstone of the reforms was the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), providing people with nationally recognisable and portable credentials that reflect attainment of knowledge and skills. Another important element of the reforms was the Industry Training Strategy, a major legislative initiative designed to upskill the workforce. The Industry Training Act of 1992 launched an industry-led effort to improve the quantity and quality of training tied to national standards, explicitly including workers traditionally underrepresented in workforce training, such as Maori, Pacific peoples and women. Both the Industry Training Act and the NQF would be excellent topics for research in their own right. This report, however, is a comprehensive review of neither. Rather, it examines both initiatives through the lens of the most fundamental education issue of all: literacy.

New Zealand, like many industrialised nations, is increasingly aware that it has a significant adult literacy problem. The term "literacy" is often misunderstood and is frequently considered to be a simpler set of skills than is the case. Often low literacy is confused with "illiteracy" – nominal or non-existent reading and writing skills – a problem that affects only a small proportion of adults in industrialised societies. Basic reading and writing skills are no longer enough. Contemporary definitions take "literacy" one step further: being able to *understand* and *use* information, including technology, effectively. Many also explicitly acknowledge its importance to all three major life settings where literacy skills are needed: work, home and community. The definition of literacy used in this report is:

> The ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential. (OECD, 1997: 14).

Recent reports by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – *"Literacy in the Information Age," "Literacy, Economy and Society"* and *"Literacy Skills for the Knowledge Society"* – are serving as wake-up calls for 22 industrialised nations, including New Zealand and the United States. Findings for both countries were remarkably similar: one in five adults have pressing literacy needs and the magnitude of the problem far exceeds the current

capacity to address it. Higher immigration of non-native English speakers is increasing demand for literacy services in both countries. Neither is able to keep up with the demand, as demonstrated by long waiting lists for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes throughout both New Zealand and the United States. Low literacy is not by any means limited to migrants and refugees – or any other marginalised group: "Low skills are found not just among marginalised groups, but among significant proportions of adult populations in the countries surveyed." (OECD, 1997: 18).

In New Zealand, three major obstacles are preventing the issue from being addressed: lack of a strategic vision by the government, a fragmented literacy sector and wholly inadequate funding. Each of these problems to some extent exacerbates the other two. The government invests very little (less than $10 million annually) in literacy programmes. This affects the literacy sector's capacity and quality of services, which is uneven. Very little research is available to inform and improve practice. More and better accountability is needed. Professional development or upskilling for literacy teachers and tutors is all too rare. Many literacy programmes are understaffed and rely heavily on volunteers. In short, the literacy sector is struggling with many issues – issues that won't be solved until adult literacy becomes a greater public policy priority.

The challenge is far too large for any one agency or organisation to address alone. The next necessary step is for the Ministry of Education to develop a comprehensive, long-term adult literacy vision that reflects their best thinking, the best thinking of other appropriate government agencies *and* the best thinking of the literacy sector. Just as the government agencies with responsibility for literacy need to better collaborate among themselves and with the literacy sector, so too do the various facets of the literacy sector. Some in the sector view literacy pragmatically, as a means to both economic and personal ends for individual workers and of benefit to companies that employ them, while others view it more idealistically and see literacy in more of a political and social justice context. This dichotomy – coupled with fierce competition for scarce funds – prevents the field from co-operating and collaborating as much as it could, and may ultimately affect the quality and capacity of literacy programmes. The value of co-operation and collaboration within and among both government agencies and literacy organisations cannot be over-emphasised.

A comprehensive strategy needs three core strands. First is an adequately funded and staffed community-based system to address the literacy needs of community members at the lowest skill levels, including ESOL for migrants and refugees. Participants in these programmes often need to improve their literacy and language skills in order to enter the workforce; many others seek to build their skills for personal or family reasons, such as helping their children with homework. Many non-native English-speaking parents join ESOL classes to better communicate with their children who have quickly acquired English in school.

A second important element is a strong family literacy system. While New Zealand is world-renowned for its innovations in children's reading and recently initiated a children's literacy strategy, it has yet to develop a family literacy system. The cycle of low literacy is often intergenerational and family literacy is proving effective in breaking that cycle in both the United Kingdom and United States. Both are developing sound family literacy models comprised of four core components: early childhood education, adult literacy education for their parents, interactive literacy activities between parents and their children, and opportunities for parents to practise supporting their children's learning. Adults in family literacy programmes stay enrolled longer than in most adult-only programmes and their attendance rate is higher, leading to better learning gains.

Family literacy has been very well-received on Native American reservations and is likely to be particularly appealing to Maori, whose culture also places great value on the family unit. This is

important because the literacy needs of Maori contribute to the socio-economic gap between Maori and Pakeha (non-Maori of European descent).

There may be ways to connect family literacy with Reading Recovery, New Zealand's renowned intervention programme through which specially-trained teachers provide one-to-one assistance to students falling behind in reading after one year of schooling. Primary schools regularly provide Reading Recovery to their lowest performing six-year-olds and research shows that an overwhelming majority (usually over 90 percent) soon read at levels comparable to their classmates. It has been so successful, in fact, that it is now used widely around the world, including in the United States. While Reading Recovery may be helping to prevent low literacy in the younger generation, it does not address the literacy needs of many adults who went through primary schools before the 1970s, when Reading Recovery was developed.

The third core component of a comprehensive adult literacy system, vocational literacy, addresses the needs of these adults – 200,000 of whom have pressing literacy needs and 160,000 of whom are in the workforce. Vocational literacy encompasses both pre-employment programmes for unemployed adults and workplace-based literacy programmes for adults who are already in the workforce. In addition to the positive outcomes for both workers and businesses demonstrated by international research, there are other reasons why vocational literacy is a smart strategic investment. First, the workforce in New Zealand turns over at a rate of about 3 percent per year (Benseman and Moore, 1999) so much of the workforce of the future is, in fact, the workforce of today. Second, due to time and cost constraints, many adults with literacy needs are not likely to improve their skills outside the workplace. This is especially the case for those with children. Third, research shows that adults who learn new skills in a meaningful context, such as their jobs, often make the most significant learning gains. There is growing recognition in the business community that low literacy is a problem for some employees and that it can be in both their and their employees' interest to invest in literacy.

Because many of the most promising literacy developments in New Zealand are in vocational literacy, four new case studies conducted for this report focus on this strand of adult literacy. The case studies show the broad range of approaches that are used and demonstrate elements of successful vocational literacy programmes. Case studies include an analysis of extensive interviews with adult literacy students, teachers, administrators and, as appropriate, employers. Six overarching conclusions are drawn from the case studies:

1. People have a wide variety of reasons for enrolling – and remaining – in vocational literacy programmes. These include: the desire to get a job or promotion; family and personal reasons; the desire to learn computer skills; general desire to learn; accessibility, openness and convenience of programmes; opportunity to learn at their own pace; encouragement from others including family, co-workers and management; and interest in improving safety on the job.

2. Businesses have a variety of reasons for establishing on-site workplace literacy programmes, including the emerging recognition that literacy affects quality and, therefore, improves the bottom line.

3. Learning opportunities are not available to all adults who want to participate in a vocational literacy course. For those to whom it is available, barriers can prevent them from taking full advantage of it. These barriers include negative experiences in secondary school that make them wary of further learning in any setting that resembles school; initial fear and suspicion; lack of time; family issues; and age-related issues (i.e. a belief among some adults that they are "too old to learn"). Obstacles to the non-workplace-based vocational literacy programmes were all related to lack of programme capacity (i.e. too many students for too few courses). Many of

the students at pre-employment programmes were on long waiting lists before starting the course – and many other adults are still on those waiting lists.

4. The primary barrier that prevents companies from establishing workplace-based literacy programmes is lack of funding. A belief that it the government's role – not their own – also hinders some companies from pursing literacy training.

5. Participants in vocational literacy courses benefit both on- and off-job. Benefits include increased confidence, love of learning and interest in further education and training; improved job performance, promotion opportunities and safety compliance; setting an example for their family members/improving family relationships; and acquisition of "life skills."

6. Vocational literacy courses can also benefit companies. Benefits cited by the case studies include reducing ACC payments; increasing safety; improving communication between workers and management; improving job performance; increasing job satisfaction; enabling company to better keep up with technology; improving the culture of the company; and increasing employee loyalty.

While the case studies are all achieving impressive outcomes given their available resources, additional funding would allow all four to improve quality and increase their capacity to assist more adults. Three out of the four have some form of a waiting list.

The report culminates in recommendations for policy changes that could improve New Zealand's response to its adult literacy needs. While New Zealand has a number of outstanding literacy programmes and the calibre of the field is impressive, five fundamental obstacles are preventing it from advancing further:

- Lack of a strong and co-ordinated adult literacy infrastructure, which affects issues of capacity and quality;
- Limited quality assurance/accountability measures, including neither standards nor widely-accepted means of measuring learning gains (i.e. assessment tools) in literacy programmes, and very little research or even very basic data on literacy students' learning gains;
- Insufficient opportunities for professional development for teachers and tutors;
- Inadequate funding for adult literacy, which affects issues 1,2 and 3;
- Marginalisation of literacy in key policy frameworks, including the National Qualifications Framework and the Industry Training Strategy.

In addition to a long-term, comprehensive adult literacy strategy, it is important to integrate literacy into other policies. Timing, as is often said, is everything, and timing for adult literacy in New Zealand has never been better. Several forces have converged to create a genuine opportunity to move forward in coming months. The Labour-Alliance government's review of the Industry Training Strategy is underway, which offers opportunities for workplace literacy. No strategy for closing the socio-economic gaps between Maori and non-Maori can be complete or effective without explicitly addressing adult literacy. These and other policy initiatives can contribute to significant leaps forward in adult literacy. A bold vision is needed. With such a vision, New Zealand could again rightfully claim its place as a world leader in social policy innovation.

Pioneering in New Zealand may have been built on strong hands, stout backs and raw commodities. Our hopes of a prosperous future rest heavily on applying smart minds in a wide range of workplace settings: in raising skill levels.

– Skill New Zealand

INTRODUCTION

Just as New Zealand once had such low unemployment it was said the Prime Minister could name every citizen out of work at any given time, New Zealand's size, relative wealth and egalitarian history all make it possible for it to become a nation with literally only a handful of people with literacy needs. The scope of the problem is manageable: about 200,000 scored at the lowest level of the International Adult Literacy Survey. If New Zealand were to set its collective mind to assisting these adults, build on the innovations of its adult literacy sector, and continue its efforts to prevent literacy problems in future generations, it would be within its grasp to become the world's first "fully literate" society.

The following pages outline steps that could move New Zealand toward achieving this vision. In addition to an overview of the extent of adult literacy needs, the report includes a history of the modern literacy movement, its theoretical underpinnings and an examination and analysis of adult literacy practice, including four case studies that exemplify good practice.

A few words on what this report is and, more importantly, what it is not. It is not a research thesis per se. Instead, it strives to reach as broad an audience as possible by raising issues and questions that must be addressed before New Zealand can move forward in adult literacy. The report is unique in that it is the first attempt by an outsider to take a comprehensive look at the issue. It reflects nine months of work, including conversations with about 200 New Zealanders with interest and expertise in literacy, including government officials, business and ITO leaders, academics, tutors, programme administrators and adult literacy students themselves.

The goals of this report are threefold:

- To provide timely and useful information to New Zealand policymakers who are not experts on literacy, but who are interested in learning more about it and who could potentially become part of the solution.
- To promote discussion and collaboration among literacy leaders, with the intention of assisting the various strands of the sector in recognising the value of collaboration and building on their common ground.
- To educate the American literacy sector about how another country with similar literacy needs is striving to address it (i.e. to assist us in "thinking out of the square" that we work in).

Over the years, New Zealand has served as an international model for innovative social reforms – and could potentially serve a leader in literacy. New Zealanders have before them an unprecedented opportunity to create a multi-faceted approach to addressing adult literacy – beginning with the government's adult literacy strategy – but extending beyond government to include other key stakeholders: industry, ITOs, organised labour, community organisations, schools, the public, etc. If New Zealand successfully rises to the challenge presented by this "window of opportunity," it could demonstrate to other nations around the world that low literacy does not have to be a fact of life – and could model the economic and social benefits that would flow as a result.

"The skill demands for work have increased dramatically, as has the need for organisations and workers to change in response to competitive workplace pressures. Thoughtful participation in the democratic process has also become increasingly complicated, as the locus of attention has shifted from local to national and global concerns. Above all, information and knowledge are growing at a far more rapid rate than ever before in the history of humankind."

-- How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School

THE UNIQUE NATURE OF NEW ZEALAND

CHAPTER 1: THE BIG PICTURE

In studying adult literacy or any other issue in New Zealand, it is helpful to understand the context. While there are many similarities between the United States and New Zealand, including a growing gap between rich and poor in the last two decades of the 20th Century – with a disproportionate number of adults with pressing literacy needs represented in the latter group – important differences exist as well. These include New Zealand's size (similar to California, but with a population comparable to South Carolina); geographic isolation in the South Pacific; greater dependence on overseas markets; and differences in ethnic make up and related politics. This chapter provides an overview of the issues and structures that create the climate in which literacy must be addressed.

A CHANGING ECONOMY

Dramatic changes in the economy over the past few decades, with momentous structural changes occurring in the 1980s, have had a major and lasting impact on education and training policy. Until the late 1960s, New Zealand's economy was closely tied to Great Britain, which provided a guaranteed market for its products. The economy was closely regulated and characterised by import barriers, tariffs and strict import licencing laws that had been established in the 1930s. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the basic structure of the economy relied heavily on import and export exchange controls, which protected profits and jobs. Unemployment was remarkably low, averaging less than one percent of the workforce. While a large proportion of the workforce was relatively unskilled, it was possible to earn a good living from unskilled work until the 1970s.

From the late 1960s, the economy began to stagnate following a major balance of payments shock and a gradual breakdown of wage-setting institutions. Other factors contributing to stagnation included New Zealand's high degree of exposure to the worldwide oil shocks of the 1970s, loss of preferential trading with Great Britain when it joined the Common Market, and farming – a staple of the economy – becoming less profitable as agriculture prices fell on the world market.

In 1984, a new Labour government under Prime Minister David Lange initiated major and controversial changes in economic policy, known as "Rogernomics" after Minister of Finance Roger Douglas. These included a 20 percent devaluation of the New Zealand dollar; immediate elimination of agricultural subsidies; implementation of a monetary policy designed to reduce inflation from levels of around 18 percent; and removal of controls on financial institutions, wages and prices and capital flow in and out of the country.

By 1990, the government had "transformed the economic policy framework from one of the most regulated in the OECD to one of the most deregulated." (James, 1999: 2). The goal of this restructuring and disinflation was to promote efficiency by replacing producers in a protected

domestic market with internationally competitive enterprises responsive to true international price and profit incentives. Some internationally competitive industries, such as forestry and paper, emerged. In the short-term, however, whole sectors became less profitable and unemployment rose from two percent in 1976 to 11 percent in 1992. More recently, the unemployment rate has hovered around seven percent.

Over the past several decades, the distribution of jobs has shifted considerably. As shown by the following chart, "blue collar" jobs have declined as "white collar" work, which generally demands higher education and skill levels, is rising. In terms of specific occupations, a number of important industries have lost a significant number of jobs over the past few decades. For instance, manufacturing declined from 24.2 percent in 1956 to 16.3 percent in 1997. Construction and agriculture declined over the same period from 12.9 percent to 6.6 percent, and from 19.8 percent to 8.7 percent, respectively. On the other hand, jobs that require more education and higher skill levels have grown. For example, business and finance grew from 2.1 percent to 12.5 percent.

TABLE 1

INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR FORCE IN NEW ZEALAND

(In percentages)

	1956 [1]	1986	1991	1997
Agriculture	19.8	10.9	10.4	8.7
Mining	1.2	0.4	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	24.2	21.3	16.8	16.3
Electricity	1.5	1.1	0.8	0.6
Construction	12.9	6.8	6.2	6.6
Wholesale/Retail	13.4	19.7	20.7	21.6
Transport	-	7.5	6.2	6.0
Finance/Business	2.1	8.3	11.8	12.5
Social	13.0	24.1	26.8	27.2

Data sources: The 1993 Official Yearbook, 1986 Census, 1993 Household Labour Force Survey, 1997 Household Labour Force Survey.

The prevailing view in the early 1990s was that one of the reasons for low economic growth was that New Zealand's workforce was under-skilled by world standards and that New Zealand was not adequately prepared to compete effectively in the global economy. This provided the impetus for significant education reforms, including the National Qualifications Framework and Industry Training Strategy.

The economic changes have led to political and social fallout:

> As in all countries which have adopted the neo-liberal reforms, incomes have become more unequal: [with] a 'significant' increase in inequality of after-tax disposable income...in the 15 years since the economic reforms began in 1984....In short, ordinary folk have not got ahead...[roughly] 400,000 in a population of 3.8 million have been unemployed or have had a cut in pay at some point. At the bottom, things have got worse: the symptoms of poverty have re-emerged in a country that thought it had abolished poverty forever...So, like other countries, New Zealanders are now divided into a minority of 'insiders,' relatively at ease with the new economy and new society, and a majority of 'outsiders,' buffeted and bewildered. (James, 1999: 7).

[1] These figures were available for males only.

Many of the "outsiders" are those without adequate literacy skills. They in particular are feeling the impact on ongoing labour market changes. These changes include the evolution of much "manual work" into "mental work," and newer processes characterised by multiple tasks, higher skills and less hierarchical structures. (Fitzsimmons, 1994 cited in Sutton, 1996). Higher levels of both basic and "soft" skills (e.g. the ability to work in teams, punctuality, etc.) are needed than ever before. At the same time, part-time work has increased and more people with lower skills have moved into the workforce. All of these changes have important implications for adult literacy and are bringing workplace literacy to the fore, as discussed in *Chapter 3*.

NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The cornerstone of the 1990 reforms was the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), a system that provides individuals with nationally-recognised and portable credentials that reflect attainment of knowledge and skills. A government agency, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), oversees the NQF system.

The NQF was created in an effort to ensure that qualifications were up to date and relevant. Prior to its creation:

> ...[Q]ualifications tended to be isolated from one another, with no clear system for recognising or acknowledging what students had previously learned...People could not move freely between different parts of the tertiary sector, receive appropriate recognition of prior learning, or access information on the full range of education options available. (Ministry of Education, 1999b: 7).

The NQF is designed to signal information to students, employers and others about qualifications that have passed a rigorous test of quality; inform employers about what skills and knowledge people with specific credentials have attained and how they relate to each other; and help people identify appropriate learning pathways, facilitating movement from one learning setting to another. (Ministry of Education, 1999b).

The NQF has eight levels, which represent varying levels of complexity and difficulty. For instance, NQF Level 1 designates entry-level education and training, and includes learning up to "fifth form" (equivalent to the 10th grade in the U.S.). At the other end of the spectrum, NQF Level 8 would be appropriate for postgraduate study. Each "unit standard" is assigned to one of the eight levels and over 13,000 standards have been registered in subjects ranging from forestry, to history, to office systems. As learners achieve "unit standards," they are listed on their individual "Record of Learning."

Acquisition of unit standards leads to a credential, known as national qualifications, which can be in the form of a National Certificate (for NQF Levels 1-6), National Diploma (for NQF Levels 5-8), or Degree (NQF Levels 7-8). Adults with literacy needs tend to work towards National Certificates and earn credits at Levels 1 and 2. In all, about 800 Framework qualifications are registered in a broad range of fields, including National Certificates in Business Administration, Computing, Engineering, Horticulture and Tourism.

Unit standards are developed by advisory groups of national experts in a given field. The advisory groups established to date are: Business and Management; Core Skills; Humanities and Social Sciences; Maori, Science and Technology; and Visual and Performing Arts. (Ministry of Education, 1999b). Other unit standards are developed by Industry Training Organisations (ITOs), which each represent a specific industry.

When it was first conceived, a goal of the NQF was to ensure that skills learned in a variety of settings (e.g. schools, tertiary institutions, workplaces, etc.) would be recognised equally. A second goal was to "help industry ensure that qualifications were available which met their needs and encouraged providers to better respond to employers' needs." (Ministry of Education, 1999b: 7). In practice, however, universities – saying their primary goal is assisting students not employers – have not accepted the framework. On the other hand, vocational providers – including polytechnics, Industry Training Organisations (ITOs), workplace education and training programmes, and Private Training Establishments (PTEs) – have generally adopted the framework. While the NQF was accepted from the outset by vocational literacy providers, the framework met with initial resistance from some community-based literacy providers, although most now have accepted it to the point that their curriculum includes assisting students in earning qualifications.

The NQF has resulted in making qualifications more transparent and more explicit about what learning has occurred. Its proponents credit it with giving people greater assurance about the quality of their credentials and making it easier for employers to understand links between different qualifications.

THE INDUSTRY TRAINING STRATEGY

A second important element of the reforms was the Industry Training Strategy, a major legislative initiative designed to upskill the workforce. The Industry Training Act of 1992 launched an industry-led effort to improve the quantity and quality of training tied to the NQF, and explicitly included workers traditionally underrepresented in workforce training, including Maori, Pacific peoples and women. The new law reflected prevailing underlying principles in education and training policy at the time (e.g. accountability/demonstrated competence and greater flexibility, with an emphasis on providing a range of pathways to learning outcomes.)

The government enacted the Industry Training Strategy as part of an effort to give New Zealand industry, which is comprised of mostly of small businesses, a competitive edge by enhancing the overall skill level of the workforce. It created incentives for employers to invest in training, primarily through government contribution to the costs of the development and delivery of both on- and off-job training. The major incentive for employers was a new training subsidy, the Industry Training Fund (ITF), administered by Skill New Zealand (then known as the Education and Training Support Agency).

The Industry Training Fund subsidises structured training that leads to nationally recognised qualifications on the NQF. The fund has grown considerably – from $20 million annually in 1993 to $64 million annually in 2000. The government's budget for 2001 increases the ITF by $23 million over the next four years, bringing its allocation up to $70.7 million per year from 1 July 2001. Industry provides an additional $102 million for training annually.[2]

The Industry Training Act created Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) to set national industry education and training standards, design national qualifications and manage work-based training that meets current and emerging needs of their industries. Other ITO responsibilities include registering training standards; registering employees as workplace assessors; monitoring training and assessment; and managing reporting systems. Both the ITF and industry fund ITOs. ITOs do not actually deliver industry-based training. Instead, they contract with individual enterprises, such as Private Training Establishments (PTEs), to deliver training. This is often done in conjunction with tertiary institutions.

[2] This figure includes some in-kind costs.

The Industry Training Strategy is widely credited with improving business performance, enhancing individual workers' skill levels and increasing labour market flexibility. It is generally considered to have achieved the following:

- **INCREASING THE NUMBER AND VARIETY OF TRAINING PATHWAYS AVAILABLE TO WORKERS**
  The ITS has substantially increased the number and variety of training pathways available to workers. Over 50 ITOs have been established to develop and implement training to meet the current and emerging needs of industry. Prior to the passage of the Industry Training Act, many industries had no formal training. In fact, 31 of the 52 industry sectors now covered by ITOs had little or no formal training infrastructure prior to passage of the Industry Training Act. Training has extended far beyond the traditional trades to new and emerging industries such as electro-technology and tourism.

- **INCREASING THE NUMBER OF WORKERS WHO PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING**
  The ITS has increased the number of people involved in industry-based training and improved the diversity of training available. Since 1993, there has been a threefold increase in the number of people engaged in industry-based training. As of June 1999, over 50,000 people were in formal training programmes earning credits on the NQF. As of September 1999, ITO trainees represented approximately 16 percent of all the learners registered with NZQA and approximately 16 percent of all NZQA qualifications awarded. This is the highest number of industry trainees since records began in 1925. (Williams and Eadie, 1999).

- **OPENING UP MORE TRAINING TO PEOPLE TRADITIONALLY UNDERREPRESENTED IN TRAINING**
  Sections 11(d) and 13 (b) of the Industry Training Act focus on workers who have been traditionally underrepresented in industry training, defined as women, Maori and Pacific peoples. Generally, women, Maori, Pacific peoples and older workers now have better access to training. For instance, the proportions of Maori and women engaged in industry-based training have increased to the point that they exceed the proportions of Maori and women in full-time employment (Williams and Eadie, 1999) but many consider that access for these groups is still too limited.

The government began reviewing the Industry Training Strategy in May 2000 and this process will continue until the end of the 2000. The review offers a legislative vehicle to clarify the appropriate roles of government and industry vis-à-vis training, and a strategic opportunity to increase investment in the skills of the workforce.

THE TREATY OF WAITANGI

The Treaty of Waitangi is considered the founding document of New Zealand. The British Crown and the majority, but not all, Maori chiefs signed it in 1840. The document was controversial at the time of its signing and remains controversial. At the heart of the controversy is the fact that two documents were actually signed: an English version and a Maori version. While the Maori version was ostensibly translated identically, there were, in fact, important differences. For instance, the English version stipulated that the Maori chiefs gave up their sovereignty to the Queen of England, while the Maori version allowed the Queen to govern them, but guaranteed Maori the right to self-determination.

Both versions of the Treaty granted the Maori people the "rights, privileges and duties of English citizenship." The Treaty also established a policy for land sales, guaranteeing Maori the full, exclusive and undisturbed possession of all of their land, forests, fisheries, etc. for as long as they wished. If and when they decided to sell their land, however, both versions of the Treaty gave the Crown the exclusive right to buy it, so that it could, in turn, sell it to English settlers. In practice,

the "rights, privileges and duties of English citizenship" guaranteed by the Treaty were often denied. With the increasing influx of European settlers from the mid-1800s, the Crown sought to extend its practical sovereignty, leading to tensions and a series of wars with some Maori tribes in the 1860s and subsequent land confiscations. Many Maori felt a strong and spiritual connection to their land and had difficulty adjusting after that connection was broken. Government land policies were also more subtly directed towards creating strong incentives for Maori to sell their land and many Maori considered these policies unjust.

From the end of World War II, a rapid urbanisation of the Maori population took place, due to both the erosion of the Maori land base and the growing demand for unskilled labour in the cities. The exceedingly rapid urbanisation caused adjustment difficulties for both those who left and those who remained in rural areas. On the other hand, urbanisation was associated with a considerable increase in Maori health and life expectancy. Living side-by-side with non-Maori led to racial tension, but it also led to high degrees of Maori/non-Maori marriage, a powerful force for social cohesion.

In an effort to ease racial tensions over land alienation, Parliament in 1975 established the Treaty of Waitangi Tribunal to investigate Maori claims against the British Crown from that date forward. Ten years later it was amended to include claims dating back to the time of the Treaty's signing. As a result, some financial reparations have been made to Maori tribes whose lands were confiscated after the wars of the 1860s or who sold their land without receiving full, adequate or promised payments. In some cases, the Maori have been allowed to buy back the land; in others, the government still owns the land. The work of the Tribunal is ongoing and many cases have not yet been heard.

Both Maori and Pakeha seem determined to deal with Treaty issues, but often have very different perspectives. For example, there are divergent views about what level of Maori representation in Parliament would be appropriate. Many Maori consider their representation as imbalanced while more Pakeha consider it to be appropriate for the size of the Maori population. The 1852 law that allowed New Zealand to form its own government, the New Zealand Constitution Act, in effect excluded Maori (among others) as both voters and candidates through eligibility criteria (e.g. voters need to own land that had been acquired through an expensive Crown grant process). The Maori-Pakeha ratio has changed over time, with the populations equalising in the early 1860s. The Maori Parliamentary Act of 1867 allowed Maori four out of 42 seats in Parliament, which severely constrained the practical utility of their vote. Today, five out of 62 seats are reserved for Maori – an amount determined by the proportion of those with Maori ancestry who choose to be on the Maori electoral roll – and Maori can also be elected to other seats. There are 15 Maori members of Parliament, or 12.5 percent of the total. About half are on the Maori roll and half on the general roll. While some consider this to be imbalanced as legislation on Maori issues can be easily overridden, others consider it fair since Maori comprise about 12 percent of the adult population.

Issues around the Treaty – including the rights and obligations conferred by its letter and spirit and the appropriate nature of Treaty settlement – are frequent topics in the news and in conversation. While it is likely to be many years, possibly even many generations, until the issues are resolved, both the government and many individual New Zealanders of all races seem determined and committed to addressing these issues.

MAORI ISSUES

Despite some progress on Treaty issues, much remains to be done. Like colonised indigenous people in other countries, Maori are over-represented on most indicators of poverty, including educational achievement, income levels, unemployment rates, health and housing. For instance, Maori leave school earlier and with fewer qualifications than Pakeha. In 1997, Maori on average

completed 4.1 years of secondary school, as compared to 4.6 years for Pakeha. The proportion of Maori leaving school with no qualifications was 38 percent, as compared to 18 percent of all students. (Fiske and Ladd, 2000: 30). Maori unemployment is about double that of Pakeha – an improvement over last year when it was nearly triple. While there is limited research on Maori literacy, the little research that is available suggests a literacy gap between Maori and non-Maori that is "as significant as the gaps that have been getting so much publicity in other economic and social indicators." (Wise, 2000: 1). This is not to say that literacy issues are limited to the Maori community – not by any means. Low literacy is an issue across all ethnic groups, but affects proportionally more Maori than Pakeha. Addressing literacy could have a major impact on other indicators, such as unemployment.

Reasons for the disparities are complex and well beyond the scope of this report. One that is worth mention, however, is a perception that because Maori have an oral culture in which knowledge was traditionally "in the hands of the few" (Duff, 1993: 2) and passed down through the generations, Maori have not made literacy a priority. A well-known and controversial Maori commentator explains this perspective: "Without the least hesitation I would suggest that our (Maori's) gravest, most consequential oversight has been the turning of the collective back on the written word." (Duff, 1993: 7). This perception does not appear well-founded. History shows that Maori actually embraced the written word when early missionaries first exposed them to it. Maori may have had a higher literacy rate than Pakeha in the early 19th Century, before this trend was reversed in the 20th Century. History also shows that Maori initially did well in western-style schools. They began falling behind in large numbers only after they were prohibited from speaking in their own language and forced to adopt English instead. (Barrington and Beaglehole, 1974, and Simon et. al., 1998).

Another reason sometimes cited by Maori for the socio-economic gap is their different cultural values and experiences. In other words, "...systems work best for one (Pakeha) group of people to the detriment of the other (Maori)." (Yates, 1996: 107). Examples provided by Maori of education traditionally valued in their community include "reading the stars" (e.g. astronomy) and other connections to nature. While this perspective is far from universal, another strand of Maori thought is that differences between western approaches used by modern schools and their own traditions contribute the socio-economic gaps:

> Maori concepts, delivery and practices of learning differ greatly to the models prevalent within New Zealand schools, and Maori have continued to highlight the racial inequality and cultural inappropriateness of the traditional state education system. Maori regard learning as a lifelong process, holistic in nature and thereby encompassing the spiritual, physical and intellectual dimensions and relationships that exist within the framework of people as part of the environment. Learning is an integral part of life, all areas of growth having equal value and requiring equal emphasis. The education of the individual is seen as a matter of relevance that includes the whanau (extended family) and hapu (sub-tribal group). Participation and achievement relate not only to the individual but to the group as a whole. (Yates, 1996: 103).

In February 2000, Prime Minister Helen Clark stated that closing the socio-economic gaps between Maori and non-Maori would be a top goal of her administration. She announced a new, high-powered Cabinet committee to "aim for higher employment, better health, better housing and higher educational achievement among Maori" (Ministry of Maori Development, 2000: 1). Clearly, literacy should be a core element of this effort because literacy skills can be means towards addressing these and other socio-economic ends.

MIGRANT AND REFUGEE ISSUES

Migrants and refugees comprise eight percent of New Zealand's population. (Dalziel, 2000). Many are not native speakers of English and enrol in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes upon arrival. ESOL providers estimate that fewer than 25 percent of refugees to New Zealand have literacy skills in their own language and 80 percent are beginners in English. While English literacy is an important issue for the migrant and refugee community, it is important to note that the issue reaches far beyond these communities and affects Pakeha, Maori, Pacific peoples and others.

In the last half century, New Zealand has accepted over 20,000 refugees from troubled areas around the world, including Ethiopia, Somalia, Burundi and Sudan. Numbers of refugees and countries of origin have varied over the years and include an influx of Hungarians after the revolution there in 1956 and Vietnamese after the war in Vietnam. Others fleeing persecution in their homelands by coming to New Zealand include Chinese, Russian Jews and Iranian Bahais.

In addition to refugees, New Zealand attracts a substantial number of immigrants each year. In 1997-98, the latest year for which data was available, 30,678 people were approved to migrate here. Most were from the following countries, according to the New Zealand Immigration Service.

ORIGIN OF IMMIGRANTS TO NEW ZEALAND: 1998

COUNTRY[3]	PERCENT
Great Britain	16
China	14
South Africa	11
India	8
Samoa	6
Fiji	6

PACIFIC PEOPLES' ISSUES

Barring Pakeha, people from South Pacific nations are often considered the most influential migrants to New Zealand. They began migrating in the late 1950s and 1960s after being encouraged to help New Zealand meet its manual labour shortages. Currently, Pacific people make up 6 percent of New Zealand's total population. The Pacific peoples' population consists of six main ethnic groups: Samoan (50 percent), Cook Island Maori (22.5 percent), Tongan (16 percent), Niuean (8.5 percent), Fijian (2 percent) and Tokelauan (1 percent). Pacific peoples are highly urbanised: about two-thirds live in Auckland and another 14.5 percent live in Wellington. (Fakahau, 2000).

Research shows that Pacific people have very significant literacy and English language needs – the most significant of any demographic group in New Zealand. About half of Pacific people in New Zealand over age 15 have some form of educational qualification and half do not. In 1997 the proportion of Pacific people leaving school without any educational qualification was 26 percent, compared to 18 percent for all students, and only one in 13 high school graduates of Pacific origin enrolled in university. (Fiske and Ladd, 2000: 30). This gap is narrowing as the number of Pacific people graduating from New Zealand universities is rising rapidly. Between 1990 and 1996, the number of Pacific peoples graduating from universities increased by over 200 percent.

[3] This list does not include countries from which five percent or fewer of immigrants arrived.

The unemployment rate for Pacific people is high – at about 17 percent – as compared to the national a· erage of around 7 percent. Nearly 75 percent of Pacific people in New Zealand's workforce are in low-paying positions, including manual labour, service and production, and transportation – industries that are in some cases reducing the size of their workforces and increasing skill demands. Youth unemployment is the highest of any ethnic group in New Zealand: 33 percent for youth ages 15-19. (Fakahau, 2000).

The Pacific population is growing 11 times faster than any other population group and is expected to double by 2031, making it increasingly important to find effective ways of closing the socio-economic gaps – including the literacy gap – between Pacific peoples and other New Zealanders. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs recommends that the best approach towards achieving this is recognise and build on the strength and diversity of the Pacific communities and foster Pacific peoples' ownership in proposed solutions.

Pacific people are relatively young compared to the rest of New Zealand's population, which suggests that educational investment in them will have a longer-term pay off. In 1996, the median age for Pacific men was 19.5 years and for women, 21 as compared to the median age of the overall New Zealand population of 32.3 years.

ADULT LITERACY IN NEW ZEALAND: PAST & PRESENT

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS "LITERACY" IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

As the demands of adult life and the skills needed to function in society have evolved over the last century, so too has the definition of literacy. The term "literacy" is often misunderstood and is frequently considered to be a simpler set of skills than is the case.

In the early part of the 20th Century when education focused on simple reading, writing and maths, literacy was generally defined as knowing how to read and write. In the 21st Century, reading and writing skills are no longer enough. Daily life requires adults to sift through vast amounts of information, understand it, think critically about it and use it in a range of settings.

Contemporary definitions of literacy still have at their core the ability to read and write, but take literacy one step further: being able to *understand and use* information effectively. An international literacy definition adopted for International Literacy Year in 1990 reflects this shift: "For an advanced technological society…the goal is an active literacy which allows people to use language to enhance their capacity to think, create and question in order to participate effectively in society." (Reid, 1994: 3). Some definitions explicitly incorporate additional skills beyond reading and writing. For instance, New Zealand's Ministry of Education describes literacy as "a complex web of reading, writing, speaking, listening, problem-solving, creative thinking and numeracy skills." (Ministry of Education, 1999a).

A second fundamental shift in the definition of literacy is that it is moving beyond the community or social focus of the definitions prevalent in the 1960s to explicitly include its value in relation to work. According to Paul Goulter of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions, "We see literacy as a fundamental building block of the new economy." In the United States, the Congress, National Institute for Literacy and U.S. Department of Education define literacy as:

> An individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function *on the job*, in the family of the individual and in society. (Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title 2, Section 203-12).

This definition, which was used in legislation enacted in 1998, was one of the first times U.S. policymakers explicitly mentioned work in relation to literacy. The definition recognises the importance of literacy in key areas of a person's life: at home, in their community and at work. Rarely have policymakers in either the U.S. or New Zealand recognised the value of literacy in all three settings. By placing greater value on literacy in some environments over others, public policies have in the past had the unintended effect of dividing a field that could be more effective if it works together.

WHY IS THE DEFINITION IMPORTANT?

While New Zealand's literacy organisations seem to be working towards the same goal – improving students' skills and, ultimately, the quality of their lives – they use a variety of means to achieve this goal. Different segments of the literacy field define literacy differently and these definitions demonstrate the range of thinking about what literacy is and why it is important. Just as the first

step in addressing any problem or issue is defining it, how literacy is defined can affect both what services programmes consider useful and, therefore, what services they provide and how they provide them. For instance, some Maori programmes start with oral literacy because, "for them, that's where literacy begins," according to Julia Tohiariki, a Maori tutor at Orongomai PTE. Next, they move to reading and writing in Maori then, finally, to reading and writing in English.

New Zealand's national organisation of community-based literacy programmes, Literacy Aotearoa, defines literacy as an empowering process of development and confidence-building that is "a creative set of social practices, variable according to context, text and purpose...a political process which empowers people." (Literacy Aotearoa, 1999: 11). Their definition of literacy is:

> The ability to use written and/or audiovisual material to express oneself, to learn and to communicate so that the individual is able to participate in, and benefit from, what society has to offer. It includes the ability to be able to integrate reading, writing, spelling and numeracy in such a way as to be able to be understood by others and to understand what others write. In Aotearoa...[literacy] encompasses Maori, English and/or mother tongue. (Literacy Aotearoa, 2000: 7).

Workbase, the national centre for workplace literacy and language, considers literacy a tool toward communicating effectively and "improving the communicative culture and skills of workplaces." (Moore, 2000b). It defines literacy as:

> The complex web of skills we call literacy is central to effective communication. The threads of this web are not just reading and writing, but speaking, listening, creative thinking, problem solving and numeracy. (Workbase, 2000: 1).

The Ministry of Education has also adopted this definition. While Workbase focuses on building individuals' communication skills by using the workplace as the context, its definition of literacy does not mention the workplace per se, demonstrating an understanding that while skills may be learned in the workplace, they are used in all areas of life. Case studies in *Chapter 5* bear this out. Similarly, learners in community-based programmes often make job-related gains, although this is not an explicit goal of some programmes. Instead, their focus is often political and social gains, as reflected by their definition.

The definition of literacy also affects government policy decisions, private sector literacy investment and can even affect access to training. Some employers view literacy as the government's domain and target limited training resources to employees with stronger skills and/or limit the training that is offered to employees with low literacy skills. (Moore, 1997). Similarly, while some industry training organisations are willing to subsidise literacy training, many will not because they do not consider their responsibility. While there are 56,000 industry trainees annually, no data is kept on how many receive literacy training. Workbase estimates that roughly 1,500 people improve their literacy skills annually through industry training.

It is imperative that any definition of literacy used for public policy recognises that literacy affects all areas of person's life, regardless of the setting in which the skills are acquired. Skills learned in the workplace can be used in the home and community, just as skills learned in the home or community can be transferred to the workplace. The transfer of learning theory states that learning that occurs in one context or with one set of materials impacts performance in another context or with other related materials." (Taylor, 1997). Other research finds, however, that transfer between different tasks is limited if the new tasks are not an explicit part of training. For instance, teaching

someone to use a newspaper does not necessarily mean s/he will be able to read a procedural manual. (Moore, 1997). This theory has influenced the emergence of the workplace as a learning place because some evidence suggests that better transfer occurs from workplace programmes to other contexts than the other way round.

Until recently, literacy was defined in binary terms: a person was considered either "literate" or not, with an arbitrary the line between the two. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's 1995 report *Literacy, Economy and Society: Findings from the First International Adult Literacy Survey* fundamentally changed that view. Instead of drawing a line between "literate" and "illiterate," the report portrays literacy as a continuum, with everyone falling somewhere along it. Over the past few years, however, a certain point on the continuum (Level 3) has become accepted as the "minimum level for competence" in daily life, thus effectively returning to a more binary approach. The OECD defines literacy as follows:

> The ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community, to achieve one's goals and to develop one's knowledge and potential. (OECD, 1997: 14).

Because the OECD's definition captures some of the best elements of various other definitions, it is the definition of literacy used in this report.

HOW LITERATE ARE NEW ZEALANDERS?

Until 1997, little was known about New Zealand's literacy rate. That year, the OECD published a groundbreaking report, *Literacy Skills for the Knowledge Society: Further Results from the International Adult Literacy Survey*. It included the first ever assessment of adult literacy skills in New Zealand[4]. This report built on the OECD's data analysis for seven other countries[5] presented two years earlier in the first ever multi-country assessment of adult literacy, *Literacy, Economy and Society: Findings from the First International Adult Literacy*.

In New Zealand, the survey was undertaken by the National Research Bureau under contract with the Ministry of Education. A random sample of 4,223 adults up to age 65 in New Zealand took part in the IALS survey. The methodology for the IALS was designed by Princeton University's Educational Testing Service and employed a sophisticated testing and scaling method.[6]
The IALS examined literacy across three domains and a person can be at different levels of different domains:

- **Prose literacy** – the ability to understand and use information from texts such as fiction and newspapers
- **Document literacy** – the ability to locate and use information from timetables, graphs, charts and forms
- **Quantitative literacy** – the ability to use numbers in context, such as balancing a chequebook or calculating a tip

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[4] The other countries included in the report were: Austria, Belgium, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

[5] The other countries included were: Canada, Germany, The Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

[6] The sample was stratified by geographic region and population size with meshblocks (smaller regions) randomly selected. Households were randomly selected within the meshblock. One person was selected per household. There was a 74 percent response rate and data weighting adjusted for most bias associated with differential non-response.

The key finding of both reports, known collectively as the IALS, is that,

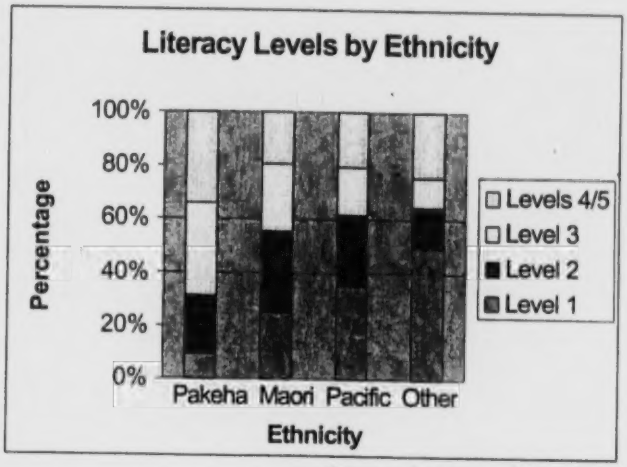
> ...[T]here are significant literacy skill gaps in every country...at least one-quarter of the adult population of the countries surveyed fails to reach...the minimum level of competence needed to cope adequately with the complex demands of everyday life and work. (OECD, 1997: 3).

Contrary to public opinion in many countries, the IALS found that literacy is an issue across many segments of the population in all of the countries surveyed. It states,

> Low skills are found not just among marginalised groups, but among significant proportions of adult populations in the countries surveyed. (OECD, 1997: 18).

It is also important to clarify that low literacy is not limited to any one ethnic group, but is an issue across all ethnic groups. In New Zealand, the literacy breakdown (with Level 1 representing adults with pressing literacy needs) is as follows:

FIGURE 1



Source: Ministry of Education

The IALS scaled literacy tasks by difficulty from 0-500 points. Rather than arbitrarily setting a point on the scale to divide the "literate" from "illiterate," the scale was divided into five broad literacy levels for each domain, with Level 1 being the lowest and Level 5 being the highest.

FIGURE 2

IALS LITERACY CONTINUUM

Literacy Level:

1 2 3 4 5

<==========>

Points scored: 0-225 226-275 276-325 326-375 376-500

Proficiency:

very low skills — competent in daily life — very strong skills

Adults at Level 1 generally have significant difficulty handling even the most basic printed materials. Table 2 gives examples of the types of activities that adults at Level 1 can and cannot generally do.

TABLE 2

SKILLS OF ADULTS AT LEVEL 1

Could Usually Perform	Could **Not** Usually Perform
• Sign one's name	• Locate eligibility from a table of employee benefits
• Identify a country in a short article	• Locate an intersection on a street map
• Locate one piece of information in a sports article	• Identify and enter background information on a social security care application
• Locate the expiration date information on a driver's license	• Calculate total costs of purchase from an order form
• Total a bank deposit	

In keeping with contemporary definitions of literacy that include being able to use information effectively, the survey assessed people's ability to use specific skills. It covered a range of literacy activities that people encounter in their daily lives, such as reading a timetable, interpreting information from tables and charts, and reading instructions from a medicine label. One item asked respondents to use a medicine label to determine "the maximum number of days that you should take the medicine," requiring them to locate the phrase "not longer than seven days." Other questions included using a bike manual, a pamphlet about a job interview and a photocopy order form. While the IALS tested for reading comprehension, critical thinking and numeracy skills, it did not include writing.

In New Zealand, 20 percent of adults (about 200,000) are at Level 1, meaning that they have difficulty handling a large range of printed materials encountered in daily life. Another 800,000 are at Level 2. Proportionally, the numbers of adults at Levels 1 and 2 are almost identical to the United States and Australia.

Who are these adults with literacy needs? Adults with less formal schooling generally have lower skills. Nearly 75 percent of adults who have not gone beyond primary school were at Level 1 in each domain. Overall, people with low levels of schooling, unemployed and low-skilled workers, older adults and low-income people generally had greater literacy needs than the rest of the population. Non-native English speakers, including Pacific peoples and other migrants and refugees, were over-represented at the lowest levels. While the IALS measured English literacy skills, 10 percent of respondents in New Zealand had a first language other than English, including Pacific tongues and the Maori language. Since English is the primary language used in New Zealand, however, adults without adequate English literacy skills face difficulties communicating in daily life.

TABLE 3

IALS LITERACY TASKS: SAMPLES FROM EACH LEVEL

	PROSE	DOCUMENT	QUANTITATIVE
LEVEL 1	Locate one piece of information in the text that is synonymous with the information in the directive.	Locate one piece of information that is based on a literal match.	Perform a single, simple operation (usually addition) for which the numbers are given.
LEVEL 2	Locate one or more pieces of information in text with distractors present; compare and contrast information.	Enter information on a form or sift through information in a document.	Perform a single maths operation (usually addition or subtraction) using numbers that are easily located in text.
LEVEL 3	Search texts to match pieces of information; make low level inferences. Identify pieces of information located in different sentences or paragraphs.	Make literal matches; integrate information from one or more displays; cycle through a document to provide multiple responses.	Perform a single operation, including multiplication and division; make higher order inferences to determine what kind of maths to do.
LEVEL 4	Multiple feature matching. Make text-based inferences to find requested information. Integrate information from lengthy texts.	Make higher-order inferences, integrate information, match multiple features of information.	Perform simple maths operation where quantities or operation are not easily determined.
LEVEL 5	Search for information in dense text with a number of plausible distractors. Make high-level inferences and at times, specialised knowledge.	Search through complex displays of information that contain multiple distractors. Process conditional information.	Perform multiple operations sequentially. Disembed the features of the problem from the material provided.

Most of the adult literacy students interviewed for this report were once early school leavers. Many have been out of school for years and found that low skills prevented them from fulfilling personal and/or professional aspirations. They had a variety of reasons for leaving school and for wanting a "second chance." Jan Hellyer, co-ordinator of Christchurch Polytechnic's literacy and numeracy

programme, who has worked as a literacy tutor for 13 years, explains, "It's not just that people can't read. There's always something else."

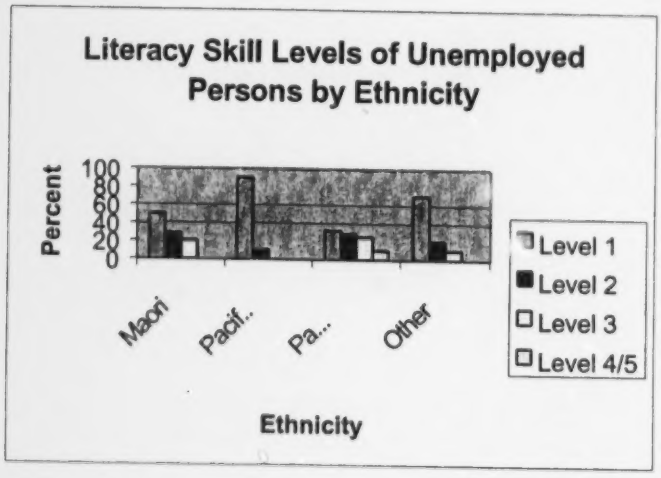
For example, Ann, age 50, left school at 15 when she had to help support her family after her father had an accident that left him unable to work. She enrolled in Training Opportunities 35 years later because "I really want to be off the benefit. I really want to work. I want to give it a go." Raewyn, in her mid-40s, "was pulled out of school at 15 by my father who had raped me and was scared I was pregnant." She enrolled because "sitting at home all day doing nothing was getting me down."

Sean, in his 40s, grew up in Ireland, where he left school at age 12: "I was the oldest of 11 so I had to leave school to work. There were 45-50 in a class and 3 hours a day was Christian Doctrine." He has since worked as a bartender, chef (learning recipes by watching and memory rather than reading them or writing them down) and caretaker of a school. "I resigned after 15 years because there wasn't any challenge any more. I want to get back in the workforce and to run my own business. I used to get around not reading, but I was always fearful of people finding out." Eugene, 36, left school at 15. He grew up with foster parents, went to 16 different primary schools and "I got kicked out of two high schools because I had quite an attitude." He enrolled in Training Opportunities because, "I was going in and out of work. I didn't have any stability in my life. I had to get a foundation." Margaret left school at 15 because "a lot of the teachers when I was back in school wanted to help the kids who were going somewhere." She drove a tractor in an orchard and worked in retail sales, deciding to enrol in a literacy programme when "I was reading to my nephew and got stuck – even on Golden Books. It took me three and a half years to get into this course. I was on a waiting list and rang up again and again."

LITERACY AND EMPLOYMENT

The IALS concludes that "Literacy is strongly associated with economic life chances and well-being. It affects...employment stability, the incidence of unemployment and income." (OECD, 1997: 17). Certainly this is the case in New Zealand. People with better literacy are more likely to be employed, have higher incomes and to receive further training. Seventy percent of unemployed New Zealanders are below Level 3 in all three domains, compared to about 40 percent of employed adults. Or, another way of looking at it is that 32.9 percent of adults below Level 3 are unemployed, compared to 14.2 percent of those at Level 3 and above.

FIGURE 3



Source: Workbase

Maré and Chapple also identify a correlation and possible interdependence between literacy and income. Even when controlling for observed correlates, income tends to rise with increased literacy, demonstrating that there may be a causal effect between literacy level and income:

> There is evidence that the level of literacy is positively and significantly associated chances of being in employment...Controlling for the widest range of factors, the level of literacy is also statistically significant for improving non-Maori and Maori employment chances...Overall, there is the strong suggestion that literacy is associated with better labour market outcomes...it is tempting to view the conclusions in a causal sense... (Maré and Chapple, 1999: 24).

While difficult to prove, literacy is also thought to affect productivity:

> Low levels of workforce literacy have a direct impact on productivity, flexibility and the ability to respond quickly to change. In an increasingly complex global market, those New Zealanders with low levels of literacy will find it increasingly difficult to obtain or retain employment...Those New Zealanders with low levels of literacy will become increasingly marginalised from New Zealand society by being confined to low-paid, short-term employment or unemployment. (Skill New Zealand, 2000a: 3).

If not addressed, the problem could be exacerbated in coming years. Nearly half (48 percent) of 16-25 year olds who are unemployed in New Zealand are at Level 1 of the prose literacy scale. This compares to 12 percent of those who are employed. Many of this group will be in the workforce for at least the next 40-50 years. If the trend of retiring later in life continues, today's 16 year olds could conceivably be in the workforce for more than 50 years, which would provide a long-term pay-off for any current investment in upskilling.

LITERACY NEEDS BY INDUSTRY

Over the past 20 years, New Zealand's labour market has changed considerably. Professional, managerial and technical jobs are on the rise, while the number of jobs for production workers is falling. It can also be argued that the labour market is becoming more selective as boundaries between education and training, work and retirement are blurring. Furthermore, the IALS predicts that the shift to knowledge-dependent, information-based economies, global money markets and the Internet are among factors that make it likely that the number of low-skilled jobs will continue to diminish. According to the OECD, "Higher levels of literacy are needed now more than any time in the past. And the demand for literacy in the future can only increase." (OECD, 1997: 11).

Both employers and government agencies are increasingly recognising literacy as a problem. For instance, a 1993 Workbase survey of 17 companies (with 300 respondents) found that 21 out of 26 human resource managers said more was being demanded of employees' literacy skills than 2-3 years earlier. (Moore, 1997). Skill New Zealand notes that:

> There has been ongoing commentary from employers about the poor basic skills of new recruits and existing employees. Often these issues emerge when an enterprise faces restructuring or introducing new technology. Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) have identified poor basic literacy skills as posing a barrier to the achievement of workplace skills and qualifications. (Skill New Zealand, 2000a: 5).

The IALS found that three broad industry groups in New Zealand have the most literacy needs (defined as having the highest percentage of workers at Levels 1 and 2): manufacturing, construction and agriculture. A breakdown of literacy levels by industry sector follows.

TABLE 4

LITERACY SKILLS BY INDUSTRY SECTOR IN NEW ZEALAND
(In percentages)

	Level 1 (low)	Level 2	Level 3	Levels 4 & 5
Agriculture	14	33	37	16
Mining	25	17	42	17
Manufacturing	17	32	32	18
Electricity	7	29	36	29
Construction	13	36	38	13
Wholesale/Retail	8	29	44	20
Transport	12	21	50	17
Finance/Business	3	14	43	39
Social	6	18	39	38

Source: Workbase

Adult literacy students interviewed for this report gave a number of examples of literacy and numeracy requirements in low skilled jobs. For example, a janitor noted the importance of being able read the label (including warnings) on chemicals she uses, and a manual labourer who unpacks delivery trucks needs to accurately count and record the number of items he unpacks each day. An example with implications for public health includes horticulture workers who need to be able to read and understand the proper amount of pesticides to use on crops.

TABLE 5

LITERACY SKILLS BY OCCUPATION IN NEW ZEALAND
(In percentages)

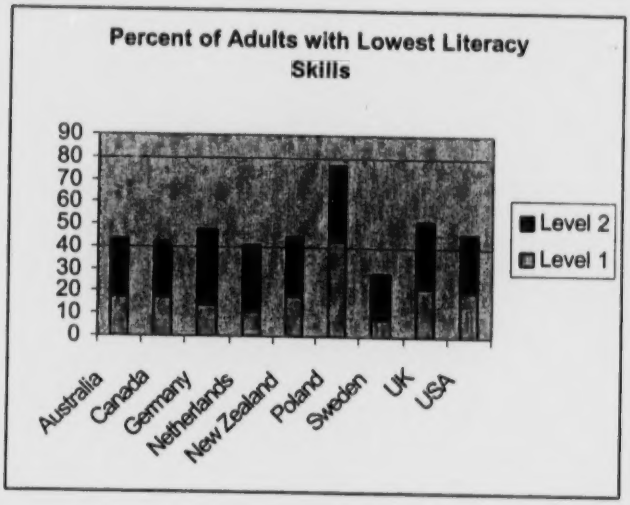
	Level 1 (low)	Level 2	Level 3	Levels 4 & 5
Armed Forces	0	32	67	0
Managers	5	14	44	36
Professional	3	12	33	52
Technicians	4	13	44	38
Clerks	5	22	47	29
Service Workers	8	30	42	20
Skilled Agriculture/Fishing	15	32	38	15
Craft/Trade	14	37	39	11
Plant Machine Operators	23	39	27	11
Labourers & Related Workers	26	40	31	3

Source: Workbase

HOW DOES NEW ZEALAND'S LITERACY RATE COMPARE INTERNATIONALLY?

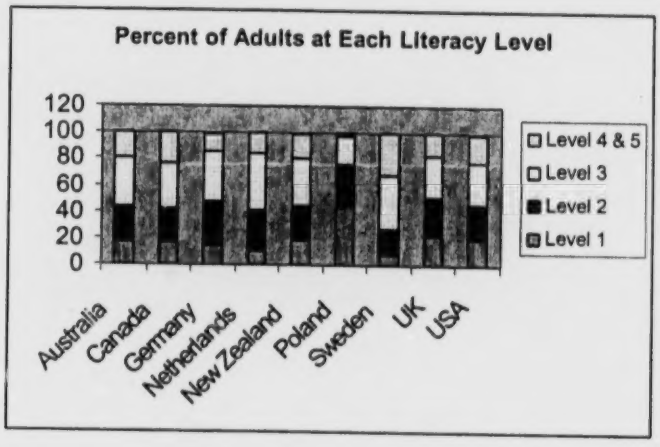
The following chart shows the number of adults at Levels 1 and 2 in each country. Since IALS rates Level 3 as the minimum level of competence, Levels 1 and 2 can be considered the number of adult with pressing literacy needs. As the following chart shows, it is approximately half the adult population in most of the countries surveyed, including New Zealand.

FIGURE 4



Almost one-fifth (18 percent) of New Zealand's adults scored at the lowest level of the prose domain. This is about the same as Australia (17 percent), the United Kingdom (22 percent) and the United States (21 percent). The following chart shows the number of adults at each literacy level in each country.

FIGURE 5



CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND AND THEORY

Over the past 30 years, the modern adult literacy movement has emerged in a number of industrialised countries. Many of these initiatives – including those in New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom – have roots in community-based, social justice-oriented campaigns of the 1970s. At the time, adult literacy was largely conceived as a social rather than economic issue and a core message of these campaigns was that literacy skills were necessary for civic participation. Adult literacy was, and in most countries still is, on the margins of the education sector.

Some of these early literacy initiatives, including the "each one, teach one" movement in the United States, have their roots in the work of missionaries Effa and Frank Laubach, who spoke out globally on "illiteracy" as an impediment to justice and peace. They helped set up literacy projects around the world, including Southeast Asia, India, Africa and Latin America. In 1967, they founded New Readers Press to publish adult literacy instructional materials, which are used in both the United States and New Zealand.

Adult literacy continued gaining momentum in the international arena throughout the 1970s as several reports were published that gave literacy greater prominence. In 1972, UNESCO published the Fauré Report, which set out principles of lifelong education. UNESCO's World Conferences on Adult Education in Tokyo in 1972 and Nairobi in 1976 also gave adult education greater standing. Public policies recognised that,

> ...adult education had a particularly important role of accessing and catering for adults who had slipped through the net of formal education – the so-called 'forgotten people.' This social justice element aroused a missionary-like zeal in many people who became involved in it during this period and which has permeated its work since, even when this element has largely since disappeared from official policy and dogma. (Benseman, 1996: 3).

A BRIEF HISTORY OF NEW ZEALAND'S LITERACY MOVEMENT

In New Zealand, the modern adult literacy movement got underway in earnest in the early 1970s. The following timeline traces major adult literacy developments from 1974 – 2000. This information is from *The Fragile Web* by Kathleen Hill and *The Fourth Sector*, edited by John Benseman.

NEW ZEALAND'S ADULT LITERACY MOVEMENT: 1974 - 2000

1974 The Hawkes Bay New Reader's Programme is born when local minister's wife, Rosalie Somerville, begins teaching several parishioners who have trouble with reading. She persuades Massey University Extension Department to run two training courses, resulting in 17 trained literacy tutors in Hawkes Bay. The National Council of Adult Education (NCEA) contributes $250 for books.

1975 The NCEA and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research estimate the potential numbers of adult non-readers in New Zealand, concluding that between 50,000 and 100,000 adults had reading ages of less than a typical 10 year old. The Logan Campbell Trust gives an Auckland University professor, Marie Clay, a $2,000 grant to start an adult literacy programme in Auckland.

1976 With the help of a grant from the Department of Education and UNESCO, NCEA runs the first national seminar on literacy, *Assisting Adults with Reading Problems*, in Levin. The National Government's Minister of Education sets up a Literacy Project Working Party to define the issue and suggest a plan for action. The group spends most of its time trying to define literacy and little comes of their discussions. Hawkes Bay New Reader's Programme continues to grow and has 127 tutors. Auckland programme divides into several smaller programmes as a result of increasing student demand.

1977 Volunteer literacy programmes are established in Nelson and Wairarapa. Representatives from these programmes, along with the Hawkes Bay and Auckland programmes, get together to create a statement of common philosophy and policy. Key decisions include making programmes student-oriented, free and confidential. Programmes decide to aim for one full-time staff member for each 35 students, based on the British model. The McKenzie Education Foundation agrees to provide a 3-year grant, totalling $30,000, to pay the salary of an NCAE Adult Reading Assistance Officer with the understanding that the government would continue funding the position when the grant expired in 1981. The officer's role was to develop a national network of volunteer literacy programmes.

1978 The Department of Education approves a full-time tutor position for the Auckland literacy programme at Auckland Technical Institute. The NCAE's Adult Reading Advisory Committee asks the Minister of Education for more support, and co-ordinator positions are established in Auckland Technical Institute, Otago Polytechnic and South Auckland. By the end of the year, there are about 60 adult literacy programmes throughout New Zealand, with over 800 students but only a total of 3.5 paid staff positions.

NEW ZEALAND'S ADULT LITERACY MOVEMENT: 1974 – 2000 (CONTINUED)

1979

The Department of Education makes money available to Hawkes Bay Community College, where the New Readers Programme had been meeting since 1976, for a full-time position for an organiser of the reading programme. A NCAE Adult Reading Advisory Committee survey found:

- A total of 59 voluntary literacy programmes throughout NZ, which had helped a total of 2,078 students
- Over half the students were under age 25
- 92 percent of the students were English-speaking
- 217 people were on waiting lists to get into the programmes

The government, under a new Minister of Education (Merv Wellington) is unwilling to provide additional literacy funding so the NCAE and volunteer literacy programmes join in a publicity campaign designed to generate support for government funding. This includes a letter-writing campaign to the Minister of Education and Members of Parliament and visits to them in their offices by students and tutors. Many MPs were surprised to learn that literacy was an issue in their district.

1980

The government, facing a national economic crisis, disestablished the NCAE. Many thought this was due to its work for adult literacy. The ARA officer sought publicity and newspaper items appeared on World Literacy Day on September 8. The Labour Party picked up the issue. In July 1980, Russell Marshall, the Labour Shadow Minister of Education called adult illiteracy a hidden problem and promised the Labour Party's support for extra funding, giving the adult literacy field hope that their status would be improved.

1981

McKenzie Foundation funding for the ARA officer position runs out. Despite applications to several foundations, the NCAE could not secure funding to continue the position. Using the British Federation's constitution as a starting point, work started on forming a literacy federation in New Zealand in 1981. Of the 82 literacy programmes, some were reluctant, fearing the expense and that a national organisation might destroy the voluntary spirit of the local programmes. Others welcomed it with the hope that it would have an impact on government and serve as a resource for the field.

1982

The Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation (ARLA) was registered as an Incorporated Society and receives a $10,000 grant from the Social Welfare Department.

1984-86

The 1984 election of a Labour government "appeared to signal a new era of hope for adult and community education…the golden glimmers of hope…all but vanished as the storms of the New Right with its philosophy centred on credentialism and vocationalism, became ascendant in New Zealand politics…" (Benseman, 1996: 5-6).

NEW ZEALAND'S ADULT LITERACY MOVEMENT: 1974 – 2000 (CONTINUED)

1987	ARLA Federation representatives are invited to Wellington to discuss their policy requests.
1988	Having served over 12,000 students, the ARLA Federation's annual grant was increased to $400,000. Funds were used to create a network of paid co-ordinators and to move towards bi-cultural development within programmes. Factors leading to the increase included both general recognition of the work that local programmes were doing and increasing concern about unemployment.
1990	The ARLA Federation creates a national workplace literacy project, Workbase.
1991-92	Adult education is further marginalised as the government's budget, known as the "mother of all budgets," imposes severe cuts on adult education and reduces funding for community-based adult education organisations by nearly 80 percent. Funding cuts have resulted in diminishing levels of co-operation among agencies and organisations forced to compete for decreasing resources, and reduced levels of innovative and new developments.
1996	A new vocational literacy organisation, Workbase, splits off from ARLA and becomes an independent not-for-profit organisation.
1997	New Zealand International Adult Literacy Survey findings are published, finding that one in five adults have pressing literacy needs.
1999	With the election of a Labour government, there is renewed optimism around adult literacy. The Ministry of Education commits to developing a comprehensive adult literacy strategy.
2000	The government's budget includes an $8 million increase for adult education and literacy programmes over a four-year period. Workbase facilitates creation of a National Coalition for Literacy and hosts a National Literacy Summit.

"The country is no longer powered by broad backs and skilled hands. It runs on brains."

-- Jonquil Brooks, former joint CEO of ARLA

THE EMERGENCE OF WORKPLACE LITERACY

The economic downturn of the 1980s and subsequent high unemployment rates led to widespread interest in upskilling the workforce as part of a larger effort to improve New Zealand's economic competitiveness. An increasingly popular view was that investing in education could yield economic benefits. While some may dispute this premise, the widespread acceptance of this view has already fundamentally changed underlying assumptions about education and consequently, has had a major impact on education policies.

> Until recently, the relationship between the world of work and the world of education was a reasonably clear one. Put very simply, formal schooling was intended to develop general thinking processes, outside of a vocational context, so that the thinking process could be used universally across all contexts... Education was what you did before you went to work...It was possible to see education and work as two distinct chronological components of an individual's life. (Moore, 1996: 178).

The line between education and work has been blurred, and education and learning are now considered to be of lifelong importance. In this new environment, the OECD and others argue that relying on schools alone is not enough:

> OECD countries have long relied on the educational system to supply the requisite supply of (increasingly) skilled workers. With OECD labour forces replenishing themselves at a rate of roughly 3 per cent per annum, countries can no longer rely on schools only, but need to target low-skill adults, the majority of whom are currently in the labour force. (OECD, 1997: 19).

Of the 200,000 adults with significant literacy needs, about 160,000 are in the workforce – and will remain in it for decades to come. (Moore, 2000b). Redrawing the lines between education and work has resulted in adult literacy "shifting from the wings to centre stage in debates about economic performance." (Moore, 1996: 179). At the same time, it is providing the adult literacy field with an unprecedented opportunity to "sell" its vision to both government and industry – to persuade them of its value and enlist these sectors in its efforts. In order to reach them, however, proponents of adult literacy have seen it necessary to "speak the language" of government and business and package itself accordingly. As a result, the face of literacy has changed – and is continuing to change.

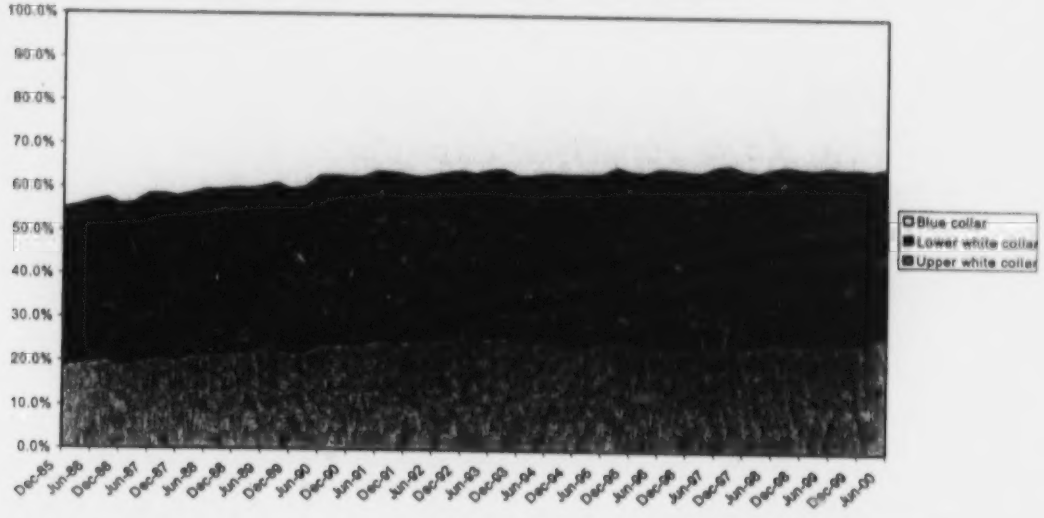
It is within this climate that workplace literacy has emerged and is growing in New Zealand. The workplace literacy movement first emerged in 1990 when the Minister of Education, Phil Goff, as part of International Literacy Year, provided funding to the Adult Reading and Learning Assistance Federation (ARLA) for a national workplace literacy project, Workbase. Over the past decade, workplace literacy has gradually emerged as a specialisation within the literacy field, allowing workers to acquire, use and practice literacy skills in context.

A number of factors have contributed to the emergence of workplace literacy.

- **TYPES OF JOBS.** A key factor is changes in the types of jobs available. Over the past several decades, the occupational distribution has shifted considerably. "White collar" work, which generally demands higher education and skill levels, is rising as "blue collar" jobs decline.

FIGURE 6

Occupational Structure of Employment: 1985-2000



Source: Department of Labour

This has led to a shortage in skilled workers. According to Michael Barnett, chief executive of the Auckland Regional Chamber of Commerce,

> We're already getting comments about shortages across all levels of skill...Unless there are fundamental changes in immigration policy and other moves to address the shortages, its unlikely we will see Auckland fulfil its potential. (Oram, 2000).

Paul Goulter of the NZ Council for Trade Unions agrees,

> Major employers all around the country are telling us about the difficulty [their employees] have performing basic tasks because they don't have basic literacy and numeracy skills. Even the simplest jobs...even 'grunt jobs' require more literacy. (Goulter, 2000).

While attracting immigrants with high skill levels can help, other options include upskilling the existing workforce.

- **WORKPLACE RESTRUCTURING.** A second factor contributing to the increased demand for literacy, communication and problem-solving skills in the workplace is widespread restructuring within workplaces as new technologies emerge. Many organisations are focusing on improving quality, adaptability and innovation. Their focus on "continuous improvement" means more sophisticated problem solving and communication skills are needed across the workforce. (Morrison, 1995; Williamson, 1995; WEB, 1996 cited in Sutton, 1996).

Many jobs are evolving from low-skilled to higher-skilled, such as machinists and tool and die makers evolving into technicians, or secretaries evolving into information managers. (Davies, 1999). The restructuring of many workplaces into self-managed work teams has reduced the supervisory/middle management layer, which had previously provided a buffer between reading and writing responsibilities at work. (Moore, 1996). Some of the major impacts of restructuring characterised by Davies (1999) include reduced need for low-skilled staff; increased levels of cognitive skills demanded of employees; and a higher level of formal education required for entry level jobs.

These changes mean workers need to adapt in specific ways, including interacting with new technology; taking greater responsibility for quality; completing written documentation; reducing error rates; complying with safety legislation; and understanding where business is headed. Employees are asked to participate actively and think of new and better ways to do their jobs. In short, companies are looking for workers to speak out, share their ideas, express opinions, offer solutions and take on more responsibility. (Moore, 2000a).

- **INCREASING PRINT LOAD AT WORK.** Workers across occupations face an increasing print load at work and need to be able to communicate clearly both orally and in writing. More and more workers need the ability to interact with the range of texts that appear in the workplace. International Standards Organisation (ISO) accreditation has resulted in more documentation of workplace policies and procedures. Workers are expected to read, understand and act on written information in ISO manuals in order to comply with them. Industries that do a lot of exporting, such as seafood, fishing, forestry and dairy, have made massive efforts at upskilling. This has allowed many more workers to receive training who might not have received it in previous years and in some cases is encouraging companies that have not previously invested in training to consider doing so.

As the case studies in *Chapter 4* demonstrate, an important characteristic of effective workplace literacy programmes is that they recognise that literacy is but one component of organisational change. An important innovation of Workbase's workplace literacy programmes in New Zealand is that they also address the organisational communication systems and processes that prevent some employees from participating effectively at work. In most cases, literacy is seen as a tool that improves workplace communication. According to the National Operations Manager for a South Auckland factory,

> [Improvement] goes hand-in-hand with other factors like wages. You can't isolate factors – it's all together. This literacy is just one part of a change programme. It will not work unless…you're committed to a change programme. You have to meet them half way. Change is about quite a number of things. In isolation changes are meaningless. Together they're dynamic.

The National Training Manager of the same company agrees, noting that it also improves employee morale when they see that management is committed to them:

> It's not just that they can't understand. It's also important how management presents itself. They have to see that management is committed to them, increasing wages, skill levels, involving them in discussion on the workplace, involving people…so people can participate more in their work. Communication is a two-way street. [As a result]…we're simplifying the pieces of paper we ask them to read and fill out.

Case studies and visits to other workplace literacy programmes conducted for this report reinforce that gains are made more often when literacy is one piece of a larger improvement strategy. In fact, a site visit to a programme which was implemented in isolation – without reviewing or changing other processes – found few benefits to the company and very little enthusiasm from participants, who described it "as a waste of time."

A Departmental Manager at Norske Skog Pulp and Paper, Mark Haslan, sums up the role of workplace literacy well, stating that while the impact "can be quite staggering in terms of the organisation, it's not a panacea. It's a component…one piece of the puzzle…along with leadership, a good business plan and capital. You can be building the other pieces of the puzzle and you can keep falling over this piece."

Research on workplace literacy programmes has found that they may contribute to more than simply improving adult's job-related literacy and numeracy skills, but also to increased reading to children at home. This has shown to improve their preparedness for school, use of language and literacy skills in the community and even the decision to pursue further education.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ON WORKPLACE LITERACY

In New Zealand, the first documented evidence of literacy difficulties in the workplace was a 1990 study undertaken by ARLA Workbase in which 300 supervisors and workers were interviewed. Supervisors indicated that one in six of the workers they supervised had significant reading difficulties and one in four had significant writing problems.

Two recent studies – *More than Money Can Say: The Impact of ESL and Literacy Training in the Australian Workplace*, published by Australia's Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs and *The Economic Benefits of Integrating Literacy Skills into the Workplace*, published by the Conference Board of Canada – analyse the impact of workplace literacy programmes in Australia and the United States. Findings of both studies are remarkably similar.

More than Money Can Say: The Impact of ESL and Literacy Training in the Australian Workplace, a major research project, published in 1996 by the Australian Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs, was designed to determine the impact of workplace language and literacy training on the Australian workforce. It includes the information from more than 500 respondents in over 30 different Australian workplaces representing 13 industries, and provides a body of empirical data as well as quantitative and qualitative information.

Prior to this report, the bulk of previous research in Australia, like much of the rest of the world, focused on qualitative evaluation of the value of literacy. Case studies and other evaluations reported positive results, but this was almost entirely anecdotal. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to establish and, as much as possible, quantify the impact of ESL and literacy training in Australian workplaces.

While the report does not aim to develop a direct causal relationship between hours of training and the dollars earned in increased productivity due to the difficulty in reducing all of the variables to one figure, it does identify key areas in which literacy training played a significant role in improving the workplace and describes the impact on each, using as much supporting empirical evidence as possible. With these goals in mind, the interviews, questionnaires and in-depth follow-up research found significant gains in productivity, efficiency and economic competitiveness linked to literacy training. These gains can be summarised as follows.

- **DIRECT COST SAVINGS.** Using cost/benefit analysis, the report identified and quantified a number of direct cost savings. These include $4.75 million for Civil & Civic/Lend Lease

Interiors in New South Wales. It also found that 10 jobs were saved at Johnson and Johnson Medical, leading to an estimated $250,000 saved in avoided redundancy payments and $40,000 per annum saved in salaries; and Victorian Hide and Skin Producers saved $82,080 per annum in reduced downtime and $10,670 in reduced maintenance costs.

The majority of respondents (70 percent on average) said their workplace had experienced cost savings that they linked directly to the language and literacy training but the nature and amount of the savings across the 24 workplaces varied greatly. The most consistently identified savings related to time, both of worker who participated in the programme and, consequently, in his/her supervisor. The other most significant type of saving resulted from more accurate and fuller completion of workplace documentation. This included better understanding written work/job orders and written messages/instructions; improvements in completing workplace documents; reporting problems in writing rather than verbally; understanding verbal instructions; using a calculator; and completing tally sheets and time sheets. The amount saved was generally perceived to be higher by those who rated the skills as "not good" before the training.

- **ACCESS TO AND ACCEPTABILITY OF FURTHER TRAINING.** Workplaces that kept statistics on this found that language and literacy training programmes increased participants' access to and acceptability of further training. The research team found a direct correlation between the provision of language and literacy training and the subsequent successful entry into specific job-skills training programmes by workers who otherwise would not have applied for or completed training courses. In addition, 72 percent of managers and 63 percent of participants considered that worker attitudes toward training had improved significantly as a result of language and literacy training. Participants overwhelmingly said that literacy had helped them assess, apply for and cope with further training.

- **PARTICIPATION IN TEAMS AND MEETINGS.** Worker participation in teams and meetings was "greatly increased" by the language and literacy training. The general amount of participation in meetings was perceived to have risen considerably. With the exception of minutes-taking skills, all other aspects of meetings surveyed were considered by a large majority of managers and supervisors (between 72 percent and 95 percent) to have improved. Most of the improvements were perceived to be greater by those who had rated them as "not good" before the training. One notable exception to this was "team spirit" which was perceived to have improved most by those who had considered it "satisfactory" before the training. Supervisors and managers registered that two out of every three participants showed an improvement in their level of team participation.

- **PROMOTION AND JOB FLEXIBILITY.** Researchers found literacy training has a positive and considerable impact on improving worker flexibility and improves workers' ability and willingness to apply for promotions. Both managers and workers cited improvements in workers being able to move from one workplace role to another, to take on further responsibilities, and to take on tasks involving the use of reading, writing or verbal skills. The improvements all fell within a range of 300 to 1,000 percent increases in the number of workers able to fulfil these tasks after literacy training. Of the participants who had sought promotions since the literacy training, the most commonly cited reasons for doing so were improved skills and improved confidence.

- **OTHER.** The "value of the training" survey, carried out in 31 workplaces, focussed primarily of the improvement of personal and interpersonal aspects of the workplace such as worker morale, confidence to communicate and "management/shop floor relations." The results point to literacy training having tremendous impact in these areas. The vast majority of managers (89 percent), training participants (78 percent), supervisors (76 percent) and union representatives

(88 percent) considered the whole range of workplace issues had improved as a result of literacy training. In the majority of cases, the degree of improvement was perceived to be highest for issues rated as "not good" before the training took place.

A second report, *Turning Skills into Profit: Economic Benefits of Workplace Education Programmes*, published in 1999 by the Conference Board of Canada, grew out of concern that global competition, technology and the emergence of knowledge-based industries have created a workplace skills gap that threatens the United States' capacity to grow and compete on the world stage. The report suggests that the skills gap can best be addressed by focusing on current – rather than future – workers. According to the IALS, over 40 percent of American workers have low literacy skills, but the number of available low-skill jobs is decreasing.

The report analyses the results of interviews with over 100 employers, employees and union representatives who participated in 45 national workplace education projects funded between 1995 and 1998 by the U.S. Department of Education as part of the National Literacy Act (1991) National Workplace Literacy Programme. (For the compete text of the National Literacy Act, see *Appendix 1*.) These workplace education programmes assisted employees in developing their basic skills (e.g. the ability to read and apply documents, the ability to use numbers, or English for Speakers of Other Languages) and at times incorporated job-specific training within a broader training framework.

The report found that 25 percent of CEOs identified shortages of key skills as a top challenge, and concludes that investing in workers' skills pay off for both employers and employees. Employers identified the following as results of their workplace education and training programmes:

- **IMPROVED QUALITY OF WORK.** Over 80 percent of employers identified an improved quality of work as a key benefit of workplace education programmes.
- **INCREASED CUSTOMER RETENTION.** Employees who improve communications and problem-solving skills often interact better with customers, leading to increases in customer retention.
- **INCREASED EMPLOYEE RETENTION.** In 40 percent of workplaces with workplace education programmes, employee retention increased, leading to lower recruiting and training costs.
- **BETTER HEALTH AND SAFETY RECORDS.** Training gives employees a better sense of safety processes and results in fewer errors in following safety instructions. This leads to fewer accidents, less lost work time due to injuries and reduced worker compensation payments. One company found that employee participation in workplace education programmes improved the safety record by more than 50 percent and reduced its workers' compensation payments by half.
- **HIGHER SUCCESS RATE IN PROMOTING EMPLOYEES.** Seventy-one percent of employers were better able to promote from within after employees participated in workplace education programmes.
- **REDUCED ERROR RATE.** Employees with better skills made fewer errors, which cuts costs. One high-tech manufacturing company experienced a 10 percent decrease in the rate of returns by customers due to defects after sending its employees to a workplace education programme.
- **REDUCED WASTE IN PRODUCTION OF GOODS AND SERVICES.** As employees gain skills they often identify ways to cut waste in production processes. Half of employers experienced output gains of 10-25 percent.

The report found benefits extend beyond the workplace. For example, participants reported that their skill gains enable them to help their children with homework, participate in school functions and volunteer in the community. Workplace education programmes, which are often joint labour-management initiatives, can also improve labour-management relations, because employees gain the confidence to speak more often and more clearly to their managers and supervisors. The report

concludes that expanding workplace education programmes must be part of a much broader effort to "create a culture of learning" in the U.S.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS: FREIREAN AND COMPETENCY-BASED MODELS

The adult literacy field encompasses a wide range of theoretical perspectives. Like the IALS skills continuum, the theoretical underpinnings of literacy can also be thought of as a continuum. At one end would be Freirean pedagogy; at the other, competence-based education. Most programmes operate out of a philosophy that to some extent draws on both. While there is a range of perspectives underpinning literacy services, the programmes ultimately have the same goal: a better quality of life for adult literacy students.

Most early literacy programmes, particularly those using a one-to-one teaching model, viewed literacy through a social justice context. The founder of the first community-based programme in New Zealand called literacy "a basic human right and a matter of social justice." (Hill, 1990: 57). This view is aligned with the pedagogy developed by Paulo Freire, an educator who lived and worked among poor rural families and labourers in Brazil. According to his 1968 book Pedagogy of the Oppressed, illiteracy is caused by unjust social conditions and the purpose of adult education is to enable learners to participate actively in liberating themselves from the conditions that oppress them. According to Freire, literacy involves "reading the world" by thinking critically and questioning one's situation and the social constructs of it. It becomes "liberatory education" – politically empowering education that encourages learners to challenge, and ultimately transform, the world, rather than simply adapting to it. (Spener, 1992).

While Freire has had a considerable impact on community-based literacy programmes worldwide, including the United States, his impact in New Zealand has been limited:

> Probably the greatest contribution that Freire has made to New Zealand adult literacy has been in providing a comprehensive model with which everyone from practitioners to scholars can describe, analyse and debate their work. Such a legacy is not common in a field which is still in its infancy of developing relevant theory, research and practice models for these purposes...The fact that adult literacy has had Freire's work as a type of 'benchmark' has probably given the field in New Zealand a small degree of academic respectability that it may not have gained otherwise. (Benseman, no date: 1).

In New Zealand, Freire's philosophy is put into practice at the organisational level in the national office of Literacy Aotearoa, New Zealand's largest literacy provider. There, Maori, as the oppressed, share decision-making power equally with Pakeha. The organisation has in recent years moved to share resources more equally between programmes serving Maori and non-Maori learners, resulting in an increase in Maori learners.

The area of literacy that draws on Freire the most in New Zealand is probably among Maori. According to the co-director of Literacy Aotearoa,

> I believe the definition most similar to that espoused by Maori pedagogies would be the Freirean model which argues that to become more fully human, is to become ever more critically aware of one's world and to be in creative control of it. (Yates, 1996 as cited in Benseman, no date: 2).

A key feature of Freirean pedagogy is that content of lessons is based on learners' personal and cultural experiences. Reading and writing in Freirean programmes flows from themes of importance to the learners and draws from their experiences. Much of the content is drawn from

the learners' culture, and materials commonly used include pictures, comics, songs and videos. This model is also referred to as the "learner-centred approach," the "liberatory approach," and the "participatory approach" to adult literacy. (Anorve, 1989, Shor & Freire, 1987, Facundo, 1984, Jurmo, 1987, as cited in Spener, 1992).

Power is shared between teacher and student, so both learn, question and reflect as part of the education process. Teacher and student treat each other as knowledgeable equals in a situation of genuine communication. The role of the teacher is somewhat different than in many other education settings, which Freire derisively called the "banking concept of education," (e.g. teacher deposits information into students as they would money into a bank). Instead, Freirean educators view education as mutual process. Rather than using the lecture format in which teachers are active and learners passive, Freirean educators prefer a "culture circle," where they face each other and discuss issues in their own lives, thereby reflecting and developing insights. (Freire, 1970 & 1973, Graman, 1989, Auerbach & Burgess, 1985, as cited in Spener, 1992).

Programmes using a Freirean model tend to rely heavily on volunteers rather than professional teachers. This raises issues around teacher/tutor qualifications: Is the best role for a teacher/tutor to facilitate reflection? How important is knowledge of the subject matter s/he is teaching? Is teacher training necessary or do volunteers simply need to know how to read and write and possess an interest in their students' culture?

At the other end of the theoretical continuum is competence-based education (CBE) – also known as competence-based training – which emerged in the 1980s. This philosophy emphasises what people can do rather than what they know. Instead of focusing on the learning process, competence-based education focuses on the outcomes of that process.

Proponents of CBE argue that it leads to standards that are constant and credentials that are portable; encourages greater accountability; and has led to more training of low-skilled workers than in the past. It is also touted for enhanced productivity, higher wages and equality of opportunity. On the other hand, opponents argue that it is behaviourist, functionalist and overlooks one of the most important elements of education: learning to think for oneself. Since CBE has been strongly promoted by industry, some believe "the real objection to CBE [is] an ideological objection to the primacy of economic and industrial considerations in VET (vocational education and training) curriculum." (Gonzi, 1994: 3). Certainly a lot of business – and in some cases, government – interest in adult literacy stems from an interest in improving productivity, which can occur as a result of improvements in individual workers' performance.

The competence-based philosophy has led to major legislative changes in both New Zealand and the United States, influencing both the National Qualifications Framework and Industry Training Act in New Zealand, and the Workforce Investment Act in the United States. These new frameworks for education and training present literacy educators with a choice: adapt or stand firm in their tradition. As a whole, much of the literacy field in both countries seems to have chosen the latter.

While not all workplace-based programmes embrace this model, some workplace literacy programmes have adopted the "functional context" approach to adult literacy, which contains elements of the competence-based approach. As its name implies, a key element of the functional context model is that it focuses on literacy training in context.

> Simply put, a functional approach to workplace literacy development means that literacy is viewed as a set of discrete skills that can be taught in the context of a particular situation, in this case, the workplace. A functional context view of

> workplace literacy programmes leads naturally to a competency-based model of education. (Steel, 1998: 1).

Functional context programmes use instructional materials that are drawn from actual work materials, such as forms that workers use on the job, and health and safety notices. An example of the functional context approach is *Case Study #3* in *Chapter 4*. Other programmes, such as *Case Study #1* and *Case Study #4*, have been more strongly influenced by Freire.

Due to their content, functional context programmes are often presented as "jobs skills" or "communications courses." A benefit of this approach is that there is no stigma attached to these types of learning, while there is still much stigma attached to learning "literacy" skills. (Uhalde, 1989).

The functional context approach "states that skills and knowledge are best learned if they are presented in a context that is meaningful to the person." (Carnevale, et al, 1990: 415-416). Some research supports this, finding that teaching skills in context, where their relevance is clear and they can be used and practised almost immediately can be more effective in terms of both learner gains and retention of those gains. Research comparing the effectiveness of the functional context approach with more traditional methods found that job performance improved more when trainees used job-specific materials than when they used general academic materials. (Kurner, et. al., 1991).

One example is military research on training low-skilled enlistees in the U.S., which compared the use of job-related, functional literacy programmes with older, general literacy programmes. In six weeks of full-time literacy training, general literacy programmes made very little improvements in soldier's abilities to read and comprehend job-related materials. In the same amount of time, functional context literacy training made equally little improvement in general literacy skills as the general literacy programmes, but four to five times the amount of improvement in job-related reading. This led researchers to conclude that the fastest way to get adults from basic literacy to well-paying jobs is the functional context approach. They also recommended that after one's literacy skills are improved enough to qualify for higher education, advanced job training or a well-paying career, that follow up and a more general literacy instruction should be pursued. (Kurner, et. al., 1991).

A manager interviewed for one of the case studies in this report, the National Operations Manager of a South Auckland Factory credits the use of this approach as one of the reasons he opted for establishing the programme: "When we were debating whether to go ahead with this [workplace literacy programme] or not, I was convinced it was the right thing to do. I was convinced this was right because the materials were so focused on things that were relevant to us."

Competence-based education goes hand-in-hand with educational standards and assessment. Using criterion referencing, a learner's performance is assessed against a pre-determined standard and no direct comparison is made with the performance of other learners. This is the model used by the National Qualifications Framework as it assesses people in terms of how well they perform a task rather than how much they know about it. For instance, a trainee hairdresser is assessed in cutting hair rather than writing an essay about cutting hair. (Sutton, 1996).

CHAPTER 4: ADULT LITERACY IN PRACTICE

As discussed in *Chapter 2*, the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) identified 200,000 adults with pressing needs in New Zealand. A fraction of these adults are improving their skills through tuition in adult literacy programmes each year. Improving the capacity of the field to assist more adults will take new funding – and, for the most part this funding will need to come from the government. Unlike the United States, New Zealand does not have a large philanthropic community to help support literacy and individual donations to help support programmes seem rare. Government funding comes from two areas: *Vote: Work and Income* and *Vote: Education*. Both support provision of services and *Vote: Education* also supports critical national leadership activities.

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

WORKBASE. The Ministry of Education provides Workbase, the national centre for workplace literacy and language, with $410,625 annually to serve as the "national expert resource" for vocational literacy. This includes promoting literacy with the government and the public, providing information and advice to the government and business, and co-ordinating and developing the adult literacy sector. It is the only agency funded by the government to carry out these activities.

Recent leadership activities include bringing together other organisations to create a National Coalition for Literacy to provide a vehicle for the literacy field to speak with one voice about literacy to the government. This will provide the field with an excellent opportunity to build trust, raise public awareness and promote sound public policy related to adult literacy. Workbase also hopes the new coalition will jointly plan a National Literacy Summit in Wellington in November 2000. This is being modeled in part on the National Literacy Summit in Washington, DC in February 2000. *(For more information, see http://www.nifl.gov).*

In September, Workbase held a successful Regional Literacy Summit with business leaders in the Manukau region. Workbase last year published a *Blueprint for Literacy* that identified key issues for the national adult literacy strategy. The document was circulated widely, and laid the groundwork for the literacy summits. In 1999, Workbase established a consortium with Skill New Zealand and five ITOs – Seafood; Engineering, Food, and Manufacturing; Forest Industries; Plastics; Apparel and Textiles – to consider literacy skill development within the Industry Training Strategy. The *Literacy In Industry* project will:

- Analyse what literacy, language and numeracy skills people need in the workplace.
- Sort the skills for an "essential skills profile/matrix" that is mapped against the National Qualifications Framework.
- Develop an assessment package, including a tool for training industry trainers/assessors in literacy assessment relevant to particular occupations.
- Pilot literacy assessment tools.

In addition to its national leadership activities, Workbase also serves as a "one-stop" centre for employers who are interested in literacy. Businesses can purchase literacy-related services from Workbase that include: conducting a literacy needs analysis of employees at companies that are considering implementing a literacy, language and numeracy programme; developing customised training courses (usually one year in length); and providing an on-site tutor to conduct the training. Training leads to credits on the National Qualifications Framework and other outcomes identified

by case studies later in this report. All of this is paid for by industry – either the company directly, the ITO or both. Related activities include:

- Encouraging businesses and ITOs to provide literacy, language and numeracy training for employees and providing information on effective ways of doing so.
- Promoting and disseminating good practice through a resource library with up-to-date international publications on literacy policy and practice, journals, case studies, etc.
- Developing quality assurance procedures for workplace literacy programmes.

Demand for Workbase's services is increasing. For instance, the number of companies it works in grew by 50 percent last year – from eight in 1999 to 12 in 2000. Demand for vocational literacy materials is also increasing, as demonstrated by an increasing number of requests for learning and teaching materials. Finally, Workbase is involved in a number of international networks and projects, including its role as an "associated centre" under UNESCO's Asia Pacific Education Innovation Development Programme.

PROVISION OF SERVICES

The Ministry of Education funds several adult literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) organisations to provide literacy services.[7] The following chart lists Ministry of Education-funded providers that specialise in adult literacy or ESOL.

TABLE 6

ADULT LITERACY AND ESOL PROVIDERS

SPECIALTY	PROVIDER	STUDENTS	WAITING LIST	FUNDING
Literacy	Literacy Aotearoa/ARLA	8,935	265	$1,763,250
Literacy & ESOL	Workbase	900	--	not public[8]
ESOL	National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Programmes	10,000	1,134	$1,918,574
ESOL	Multicultural Centre for Learning and Support Services	117	102	$199,800
ESOL	Pacific Island Education Resource Centre	90	--	$751,122
				$4,632,746[9]
	+ Some Training Opportunities, Youth Training and ITOs			

LITERACY AOTEAROA . Literacy Aotearoa, formerly the Adult Reading and Learning Assistance (ARLA) Federation, is a national non-profit that was established in 1982. It is a membership organisation with 65 affiliates that deliver services in a wide range of settings including schools, prisons, iwi, runanga, private training establishments (PTEs), workplaces and churches. Literacy Aotearoa, which is NZQA-accredited, specialises in training for literacy tutors and it encourages its affiliates to provide tutors with 100 hours of training before working with students. In addition to

[7] Funding for primary providers is from *Vote: Tertiary Education*.

[8] Workbase's provision of services is funded by employers and ITOs, not the government.

[9] In addition to this amount, about $3 million of Training Opportunities funding is also used for adult literacy.

providing training for volunteer literacy tutors, Literacy Aotearoa provides training resources and offers networking opportunities for literacy workers and students.

Students in Literacy Aotearoa programmes, like students in one-to-one programmes elsewhere, often have the greatest literacy needs and lack the confidence to enrol in a class. Many had negative experiences in school and are not eager to return to the classroom. Often after a period of one-to-one tutoring, students' skills and confidence will increase, enabling them to go on to another programme, such as Training Opportunities or Youth Training.

Philosophically, Literacy Aotearoa seems to approach literacy from a Freirean perspective:

> Literacy difficulties are usually the result of inequalities in social and economic systems...Literacy services should involve learners becoming more aware of the world and creating an understanding of power relations and influences which operate in it. (Literacy Aotearoa, 2000: 5).

Literacy Aotearoa is a "Treaty-based organisation," which means that while its services are available to all adults with literacy needs, it actively promotes Maori participation – as both students and tutors – in literacy. In recent years, Maori participation has increased. In 1997, 43 percent of Literacy Aotearoa's affiliated students were Pakeha, 29 percent Maori, and 6 percent Pacific peoples.

Literacy Aotearoa promotes literacy in both English and Maori, because

> It is important to re-establish Maori language literacy in order that Maori recreate and achieve the cultural basis of their political, social and cultural existence. It is imperative that the new learning of Maori language literacy be directed by a critical approach to learning...An important consideration not to be left aside in the Maori struggle for critical or 'proper' literacy is the need to struggle for knowledge and understanding of the language and practices of the coloniser...Within the struggle of working out political and social relationships it is crucial to Maori power and control that their critical literacy is at a level that will cope with the pressure of any challenge from colonising forces. (Jenkins 1992, as cited by Literacy Aotearoa, 1999: 10).

Over 2,500 volunteer tutors in Literacy Aotearoa affiliates worked with 8,935 students for an average of 1.4 hours per week in 1997, the latest year for which data is available. Services are free to the students.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ESOL HOME TUTOR PROGRAMMES. The National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Programmes is in many ways similar to Literacy Aotearoa, but rather than serving Maori and Pakeha, it focuses on refugees and other migrants who arrive in New Zealand with little or no English, providing them with the first, basic step on a pathway to competence in English.

Adult volunteers assist non-English speaking migrants and refugees to learn English and participate effectively in their new community. Unlike Literacy Aotearoa, where students and tutors generally meet in a community setting, ESOL home tutor volunteers go to learners' homes to teach them English one-on-one and provide friendly help in accessing information and services. Home tutors work with learners regularly, usually on a weekly basis, and receive formal training to prepare them for this role. Training includes sessions on cultural awareness, different learning styles and learning needs, and helping with English in the context of everyday life. Sessions are free to the

students, and are tailored to each individual's learning needs and goals. Practical tasks, such as working towards a driver's license or making an appointment to see a doctor, are emphasised.

Advantages to the home tutor programmes include:

- **FLEXIBILITY IN SCHEDULING.** Tutoring can be scheduled around the learner's family and work commitments.
- **FLEXIBILITY IN LOCATION.** Tutoring is available in communities where English classes are not available.
- **COMFORT.** Meeting in the home is often a more comfortable learning environment than a classroom for people with little previous formal education.

In addition to co-ordinating training for volunteer ESOL tutors throughout the country, the National Association of Home Tutor Programmes develops resources for tutors, including a library with books, pictures, worksheets and audiotapes.

ESOL home tutors assist about 2,500 learners per week throughout New Zealand. Demand exceeds the supply and waiting lists are common.

While the practical problems of transportation, money, childcare and lack of information about classes prevent many refugees and migrants from initially accessing ESOL classes, home tutors encourage involvement in ESOL classes within a year. About 75 percent of the migrants and refugees whom home tutors work with go on to ESOL classes at the conclusion of home tutoring, such as those offered by polytechnics or MCLaSS.

MULTI-CULTURAL CENTRE FOR LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES. The Multi-cultural Centre for Learning and Support Services (MCLaSS) offers English classes to refugees and disadvantaged migrants of non-English speaking backgrounds, such as Ethiopia and Cambodia. Many are not literate in their native tongue.

In addition to English classes, MCLaSS provides education resources, support services and community orientation programmes (such as Biculturalism; Maori, Pakeha, and the Treaty; Health and the New Zealand Health System; Schooling and the Education System.) MCLaSS also provides free creche and support for transportation costs for ESOL students. Students have 10 hours of class per week (2 hours per day, 5 days per week).

A high-quality early childhood education and ESOL programme is provided through a Playgroup and Caregivers' class. Half of the caregivers/ESOL learners must be with the children at any time. The other caregivers receive one-hour intensive ESOL tuition. Budget constraints, however, limit ESOL playgroup teacher payment to two contact hours. Like the National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Programmes, services are free to students.

Because MCLaSS already offer high-quality adult ESOL lessons and childcare – two of the core components of family literacy – it would be a promising programme to pilot family literacy.

PACIFIC ISLAND EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE. The Pacific Island Education Resource Centre (PIERC), provides English language classes to Pacific peoples.[10]

SKILL NEW ZEALAND. While it does not provide services directly, Skill New Zealand is playing an increasingly important and visible role in adult literacy through funding the provision of services.

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[10] Further information is not available as PIERC did not return repeated phone calls.

In addition to the Industry Training Strategy, Skill New Zealand's primary involvement in literacy is through purchasing contracts with providers of Training Opportunities and the Youth Training programme (though *Vote: Work and Income* and *Vote: Education* respectively). All training in both programmes is designed to lead to employment or further education and training. Skill New Zealand is contracted by the Department of Work and Income to purchase Training Opportunities for adults with significant histories of unemployment or low qualifications. Skill New Zealand, in turn, contracts with providers to achieve certain outcomes, such as students entering full-time employment or moving into further education. Skill New Zealand negotiates specific employment and further training outcomes with training providers based on employment opportunities in the local labour market and the focus of the training.

Participants on both Training Opportunities and Youth Training follow individual learning programmes that consist of a mix of workforce skills including confidence, communication, industry skills and workplace experience. They earn credits on the National Qualifications Framework. Neither programme uses a classroom-based approach and according to Skill New Zealand, "Much of the success of these initiatives stems from the practical adult learning environment they provide, along with links to workplaces and a strong employment focus." (Skill New Zealand, March 2000: 8). Many of the adult learners in Training Opportunities who were interviewed for *Case Study #1* and *Case Study #2* commented that they liked the fact that Training Opportunities is "not like school" because they can go at their own pace.

Training Opportunities participants are usually 18 or older, unemployed and usually have few formal education credentials, which is a requirement for their participation. Many are referred by Workbridge or by caseworkers at the Department of Work and Income. They can stay in Training Opportunities until they have accumulated 240 credits on the National Qualifications Framework. Many trainees in Training Opportunities need to improve their literacy skills in order to achieve long-term employment. All Training Opportunities providers who recognise literacy as a barrier to achieving employment outcomes are expected to assess participants' literacy skills and then either attempt to address them on-site or refer participants to a local literacy programme.

There is a variable capacity among training providers to effectively integrate literacy skills into individual learning programmes. Constraints include cost, the amount of time it takes to make progress on literacy and limited availability of tools for demonstrating progress on literacy. Skill New Zealand has identified a number of barriers to improving literacy outcomes in all Training Opportunities and Youth Training programmes:

- Providers may not be getting a clear message from Skill New Zealand on literacy. To address this, Skill New Zealand is developing a strategy statement on literacy.
- Measuring achievement in a way that is appropriate for adults and doable for tutors is a challenge. Considerable development work is needed to develop literacy standards and tools for assessing learners' literacy levels and progress on literacy. NZQA is in the early stages of developing such standards.
- Training Opportunities tutors are employed based on industry knowledge and the ability to communicate with participants, rather than with skills in literacy training. This means they frequently lack the confidence and skills to integrate literacy into their training.

In an effort to address these barriers by upskilling Training Opportunities tutors, Skill New Zealand has been piloting literacy workshops for its tutors. One-quarter, or 120, of the Skill New Zealand tutors for the Manukau region had three to four days of literacy training earlier this year. While the workshops were not intended to make the tutors experts in literacy, they were designed to help tutors know what to do when they come across Training Opportunities participants with pressing literacy needs. If this first set of workshops is effective, it is likely that all Skill New Zealand tutors in the region will receive similar training in the future.

A second group of recent pilot projects, which will continue until June 2001, address the organisational capacity of providers to address literacy. Three clusters of providers (including one focused on Maori providers) will work with a literacy expert for 12 months to develop resources, systems and practices to improve their literacy delivery. As part of this process, Skill New Zealand will contract with a literacy expert to assist them in identifying what is already working well and learning more about how to provide literacy efficiently.

While neither Training Opportunities nor Youth Training is funded explicitly to address literacy skills, many participants in both programmes have literacy needs. Over the last 12 months, Skill New Zealand has begun identifying ways to enhance the quality and quantity of literacy outcomes achieved by Training Opportunities and Youth Training participants. A small number of Training Opportunities providers include a large component of literacy skills in their training. In 1999, approximately $3 million of literacy education was purchased from 26 providers nationwide, two-thirds being from Training Opportunities providers through *Vote: Work and Income* and the balance through *Vote: Education*. Nationally there are 44 Training Opportunities and Youth Training programmes that are 80 percent or more literacy, with several hundred learners at any given time in programmes with significant literacy content.

In 1999, nationally about half of Training Opportunities participants got jobs and an additional 10 percent progressed into further education or training. A 1999 evaluation of Training Opportunities found that six months after completed their training approximately one-third of participants were still employed, one-third had gone on to further education and training, and one-third were unemployed. One year after completed training, about 60 percent were working or engaged in education or training, and about 40 percent were unemployed.

POLYTECHNICS AND OTHERS. Some adult literacy services are occasionally provided through the Department of Work and Income and tertiary education institutions, particularly polytechnics. While many offer second language tuition, literacy does not seem to be a priority for most polytechnics. Many seem to be trying to become universities so they are focusing on students at the other end of the skills spectrum. The Labour-Alliance government is interested in reversing this trend. Polytechnics that find students are not ready for their courses often refer them to local Training Opportunities or ESOL programmes.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

In recent years, adult literacy funders – including government agencies – in both New Zealand and the United States have been pushing for greater information on results of literacy programmes.

In the United States, a major piece of legislation, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, established a process by which outcomes must be collected and reported to the government by all programmes that receive government funding. This is part of a much broader movement towards accountability across education. The message is clear that in the future, only programmes that can demonstrate their value will continue to receive federal funding.

Adult literacy provider effectiveness can be measured three ways:

1. Assessing the degree of learning that takes place among adult literacy students a result of their participation in an adult literacy programme.
2. Assessing the effectiveness of the provider in order to improve its efficiency.
3. Assessing the amount and type of change that occurs in greater society or the community (Benseman and Sutton, 1999: 23).

While option 3 can be quite difficult to measure, there is international research that can be helpful in developing benchmarks for options 1 and 2.

The Adult Literacy Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) in the United Kingdom conducted a research study in 1992 that compared the effectiveness of different types of literacy provision, including one-to-one tutoring, small group tuition and "open" learning. The study was unable to draw definitive conclusions about one style being more effective than the others. (Benseman and Sutton, 1999: 26). A similar study in Australia isolated key factors to effective provision and determined that they were not specific to any one type of provision. The key factors to effective provision identified include:

- **PLANNING.** Successful programmes had clear aims that were written down, defined and widely understood.
- **REFERRAL SYSTEMS.** Clear referral systems were needed to help students find the most appropriate scheme for their needs.
- **MONITORING AND EVALUATION.** Systematic monitoring was not possible without clearly defined aims and goals.
- **ADEQUATE LEARNING TIME.** Regular attendance and the amount of time spent in tuition/course were central to success.

The study concluded that programmes aimed at specific target groups of learners tend to achieve better attendance and ultimately, better attainment of student goals than providers of more general adult literacy provision. In addition, programmes with a set schedule, small numbers, students with similar needs, and that emphasised the importance of regular attendance and commitment to the course, had better attendance and retention rates. Students who put the most time in the course on a weekly basis and who identified accreditation as an objective made more gains than those who did not. (Benseman and Sutton, 1999: 26).

Another Australian study (Brennan, Clark & Dymock, 1989 cited in Benseman and Sutton, 1999) found the following factors important to success:

- a supportive atmosphere for students in class and at home and/or work
- a "good" tutor (and consistently the same tutor)
- group interaction in a class
- well-designed groups
- "counselling" that allows students to redefine objectives and recognise their learning progress
- availability of support services, such as transportation and childcare.

The researchers found that events in the lives of the students outside the classroom also had a clear impact on learning gains. (Benseman and Sutton, 1999: 27). This is consistent with findings in the case studies conducted for this report. A related finding is that a wide range of issues in the lives of the students affected why they needed the adult literacy programme in the first place (i.e. why they left school early and without adequate skills).

The case studies that follow demonstrate many of the elements that have been associated with good practice. While all four case studies are helping adult literacy students meet their goals and ultimately improve their quality of life, there is always room for improvement. Therefore, at the end of each case study is a brief summary of suggestions from students interviewed for how each programme could be improved.

CASE STUDIES

Four new case studies were conducted for this report. Due to the increasing importance of literacy to success in the labour force, all four portray adult literacy programmes with the stated goal of preparing adults for entry into or advancement within the workplace. It is noteworthy that all four also demonstrate important benefits to participants beyond the workplace. The four programmes are intentionally quite different and are designed to show the broad range of options that are effective. Case studies are also intended to provide general examples of "good practice" and all four were deemed effective by a majority of students interviewed.

For each case study, the literacy programme was visited for a minimum of three days. Most were visited for four days. Classes and one-to-one tutoring were observed and numerous individual interviews were conducted with students, staff and management (at workplace-based programmes). Over 100 people were interviewed for the case studies. A list of the core questions asked of interviewees is in *Appendix 2*. Case study sites were selected after consultation with literacy experts and site visits to a number of programmes across New Zealand. By design, those selected are at various stages of development – from 6 months to 6 years – and assist adults with a wide range of backgrounds and needs. The chart below lists basic information about each of the four case studies.

A two-page profile provides basic information about each programme. This is followed by a more detailed exploration of a series of questions around three themes:

- Motivation – Why was the scheme established? Why do the learners use it?
- Barriers – What hinders participation in or establishment of vocational literacy programmes?
- Benefits – What are the outcomes? How do students benefit? In the case of workplace-based programmes, this includes benefits to both workers and the company.

TABLE 7

CASE STUDIES AT A GLANCE

CASE STUDY	STUDENTS	LEARNING FOCUS	SETTING	FUNDING
Christchurch Polytechnic	Mainly Pakeha with some Maori and Pacific peoples	Adult literacy/ Pre-employment	Tertiary institution	Government (Training Opportunities)
Hagley Learning Centre	Mainly Pakeha with some Maori and Pacific peoples	Adult literacy/ Pre-employment	Community (high school)	Government (mainly Training Opportunities)
Factory[11]	Pacific peoples only	ESOL	Workplace and ITO	Company
Te Whare Ako	Maori initially; gradually broadened to include others	Adult literacy initially; gradually broadened to include further training	Workplace	Company

[11] As a condition of using this site as a case study Workbase, the provider, requested that the name of the factory not be used so this report would not pre-empt their future case study there.

PROFILE #1: ***TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES, CHRISTCHURCH POLYTECHNIC CHRISTCHURCH***

TYPE OF PROGRAMME: Pre-employment **COST:** $225/trainee per week (for 30 hours)

GOAL: To make further training a conceivable and attainable goal by raising trainees' literacy, language and numeracy skills and increasing their confidence, self-awareness and aspirations. The course aims to change the locus of control from an external source to the trainee in order that learning will also take place outside of the course environment.

TYPES OF SERVICES: Basic literacy and numeracy
Computer instruction
Referrals to additional education and training

WORK-RELATED[12] OUTCOMES: 65 percent go on to further training; 5 percent get jobs.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 28 per year (14 each term), with a 99 percent occupancy rate (i.e. if a student drops out, s/he is immediately replaced by someone on the waiting list). About five students rollover each term.

STUDENT SELECTION: Learners are selected after interviews with the programme co-ordinator. Priority is given to pre-readers and beginning readers, and to ensuring a mix of men, women, races and ages.

STRUCTURE: 30 hours per week for 18 weeks of independent learning, small group and one-to one tutoring; graduation includes certificates of achievement from both the polytechnic and Skill New Zealand, which funds the programme.

CURRICULUM:
The programme is considered a "first step" for adults who have not previously had success in the traditional education system. The goal is for the students to acquire the NQF's National Certificate in Employment. Trainees are supposed to achieve 1.5 NQF credits per week, which is seldom realistic. Most work centres around improving reading, writing, spelling, mathss, CV-writing and life skills such as managing time and goal setting. Tools used include language experience (i.e. dictating stories), writing autobiographies and independent projects such as researching the impact of alcohol on pregnancy. As students show interest in other polytechnic courses, enrolment is facilitated. About one-third of the students are taking self-development and anger management courses. Others are taking courses such as pre-science and bridging mathss.

LEARNER PROFILE:
Some trainees struggled in previous learning situations to the extent that a few cannot spell their own surname and the majority cannot spell their address. One, in her 30s, says, "I'd never read a book before I came here. I've read 22 now. My favourite is *Little Red Riding Hood*." Ten out of the 14 students have learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. Despite this, many have been employed long-term in jobs that do not require much use of literacy skills. Others have never been employed. Completing the course is a major and first-time achievement for many.

[12] For non-work related outcomes, see section on "Benefits to Workers."

FUNDING SOURCE: 100% funded by Skill New Zealand. Of the total funding, Christchurch Polytechnic uses 35 percent for institutional overheads and provides the space (two rooms), furniture, 5 computers and access to the Learning Resource Centre, recreation centre and library. Students are taught to use the library independently but some expressed concern that there are not as many books at their level as they would like.

REASON FOR LITERACY PROGRAMME: The programme began when the polytechnic's Director of Special Programmes became interested in training for the unemployed. The programme was originally funded by the Department of Labour's regional employment agency.

POLYTECHNIC PROFILE: The programme is autonomous within the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, the largest vocational and technical training institution in the South Island. Courses range from part-time interest to full-time degrees and include business, community studies, computing, engineering, food & hospitality, International School of English Language, midwifery, nursing, professional hairdressing and te matauranga Maori.

OTHER FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS:

- **Co-operative and innovative learning environment.** All trainees say that they experienced failure in a more competitive school environment. Here, they are encouraged to work co-operatively and help teach one another. Students who are strong at maths take turns creating maths worksheets for the others. Those who are doing well in reading volunteer as peer tutors with each other and at Hagley Learning Centre. (See *Case Study #2.*)
- **Well-trained tutors.** There are three tutors – one full-time and two part-time. All are experienced and one has a diploma in tertiary education. Another is working towards a psychotherapy diploma and finds some of those skills useful in this setting. A student said, "They have good teachers. I liked [my tutor] when I first met her so I decided to give it a go." Another adds, "They don't put you down here [like school]. That can do a lot of damage."
- **Curriculum based on students' interests**, such as writing basic reports on issues of interest. A mother who learned about the impact of alcohol on pregnancy said, "I wish I knew this before. My daughter has asthma because I was partying when I was pregnant."
- **Physical location.** Several students commented that they appreciate the respect that comes with taking a course at a tertiary institution. According to one student: "People sort of look up at me when I say I'm at the polytechnic. I've enjoyed that."
- **Excellent relationship with other local providers**, such as Hagley, Workbridge, WINZ, ARAS (local one-to-one volunteer literacy scheme) and community corrections.
- **Safe environment.** Many of the students interviewed said they had been the object of bullying in school and appreciate their sense of "belonging" here. They realise that they are not "the only one" with reading difficulties and they actively support each other in their learning. According to one student, "I can't wait to get here every morning."
- **Integration of Maori concepts of holistic learning.** The co-ordinator has attended Maori courses for over 20 years and the level of Maoritanga that she has achieved so far is integrated into the daily running of the class. Tutors actively try to create a sense of community, which is why all students start and finish the course at the same time.

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS: Students recommended hiring another full-time tutor, acquiring more books at their level and more and better computers. Students also expressed a desire to stay longer: "You're not going to learn four years of high school in 18 weeks." Another added, "I'd like to get on this course again, but there's not much chance of that."

PROFILE #2: ***HAGLEY LEARNING CENTRE CHRISTCHURCH***

TYPE OF PROGRAMME: Pre-employment **COST:** $205/student per week (for 30 hours in the programme)

GOAL: To provide a dynamic learning center that provides school leavers and persons who have left mainstream education with a second chance to achieving education and skill standards necessary for success in further training or employment.

TYPES OF SERVICES: Basic literacy and numeracy
Basic computer instruction

WORK-RELATED[13] OUTCOMES: 70 percent go on to further training, mainstream tertiary education or a job.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER YEAR: Around 40 students at any given time (36 Training Opportunities and six Youth Training) with up to 80 on the waiting list.

STUDENT SELECTION: Potential students are interviewed and selected based on the likelihood of their succeeding in the workforce or in further training. According to the co-ordinator, "I have to look at whether or not a person is likely to be an outcome. This includes their willingness and ability to participate in a group and their motivation – how they got here." This raises issues around "creaming" and ensuring that those most in need (and possibly less likely to succeed) also have access to improving their skills. The co-ordinator also believes that having a broad base of learners from different skill levels improves the quality of the programme. Skill New Zealand requires a minimum number of people from "special populations," such as women and Maori.

STRUCTURE:
Open entry and open exit. Students have individual learning programmes and work in groups of 10 with a tutor. They receive one-to-one and small group assistance. Students attend the programme for 30 hours per week, though a significant portion of this is not used for literacy per se, but for life skills and recreation

CURRICULUM:
The curriculum focuses on "holistic style" learning – focusing on the whole person. Activities are planned around students' interests. About half of the students take classes at Hagley High School, which are paid for by the Centre at a cost of about $80 per student per year. According to the co-ordinator, "We like for them to be here for 3 months before taking a class at high school. If it fits in to where they want to go, we encourage it." Courses include both mainstream education, such as English and mathss, and electives such as cooking, computers and woodworking. Enriching activities outside the classroom are also available to students. This includes extensive recreation opportunities such as overnight camping trips.

LEARNER PROFILE:
Most have basic literacy skills but need to improve them to function well in daily life. "Some of them have been to hell and back" in their personal lives, according to the programme co-ordinator.

[13] For non-work related outcomes, see section on "Benefits to Workers."

FUNDING SOURCE: 100 percent funded by Skill New Zealand with Hagley High School providing oversight. The board of trustees of Hagley High School delegated responsibility for the learning centre, including responsibility for hiring its staff to its principal and management committee. The learning centre runs autonomously within the boundaries set by the committee. The learning centre's co-ordinator deals with the day-to-day running of the centre.

REASON FOR LITERACY PROGRAMME: Skill New Zealand approached Hagley High School, an alternative high school campus, in 1994 when some Training Opportunities students didn't have the literacy skills necessary to succeed in the course and asked Hagley to develop a proposal for a literacy and numeracy training facility for unemployed adults.

HAGLEY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE: Hagley is an alternative high school. Fifty percent of its students are adults (19 years or older).

OTHER FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS:

- **Well-trained tutors.** The four tutors are very well-qualified. Two of the staff are trained teachers and another is working towards a Diploma in Tertiary Teaching. Another has been an adult student at Hagley Community College and at Canterbury University and has a post-graduate qualification in adult teaching.
- **Professional development is an ongoing priority.** Skill New Zealand funding covers the cost of tutors taking courses related to adult literacy. "Professional development is written into the contract. They pay for it and give us...time off...I'm into my ninth year of professional studies, including computer studies, Treaty courses and counselling courses," according to one tutor. Using the funding for professional development is not written into Hagley's contract; rather it is the staff initiative that is responsible for it being used this way.
- **Work experience** opportunities are sometimes available to students, but may not be maximised as much as they could be. Work experience arrangements are left to the students to organise and about 10 percent of the students are doing work experience one day per week.
- **Students learn at their own pace and in their own way.** Students take responsibility for their own learning. "You just sort of teach yourself and ask for them to give you a hand if you get stuck," according to one student. Each student is assigned to one tutor, who "gets to know our students inside out and backwards and forwards." Tutors are familiar with the "multiple intelligences" theory and assist students in determining their own learning style.
- **Close relationship with other community organisations**, including Christchurch Polytechnic and a local vocational training centre, the Christchurch Academy, which refers students.
- **Safe, supportive, non-competitive environment.** Tutors try to facilitate camaraderie and build trust among students. Because some students have had negative experiences with testing, tutors also try to make assessment as non-threatening as possible by conducting a "skills checklist" with each student only after they have been there for a month.
- **Support services.** Students like all Training Opportunities and Youth Training participants get up to $60 in weekly travel assistance, which is deposited directly into their bank account by Skill New Zealand.

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS: A number of students expressed desire for more structure to their learning and some suggested separating students over 18 years from those under 18 years due to a difference in motivation levels, as well as separating those who can't read at all from those who can. "Students who can't read are mixed in with people who can. They need a special class for the people who can't read at all." There was also concern that some tutors treated them more like children than adults and that the name "learning center" is inappropriate. According to one student, "People go, 'learning center'? What's a 'learning centre'? Outside these walls people look down on you."

PROFILE #3: ***FACTORY***
SOUTH AUCKLAND

TYPE OF PROGRAMME: Workplace **COST:** About $56 per student/week (for 2 hours of instruction)

GOAL: To develop a safer and more productive business by bringing about fundamental changes in workplace practice and communication, including a proactive approach to solving problems and better problem-solving skills.

TYPES OF SERVICES: Basic literacy and ESOL.

WORK-RELATED OUTCOMES: The programme has been underway for about 6 months so outcomes have not yet been formally measured. Three participating workers have been promoted and "I've seen enormous change," said the National Operations Manager. "People are phoning up when they wouldn't do that before. Absenteeism is better. People smile at you more. The customer base has grown and quality standards have sky-rocketed."

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER YEAR: 25 increasing to 40 in 2001 (out of 130 employees).

STUDENT SELECTION: The company selected learners at the lowest skill levels and mixed in a few with higher skills. It was portrayed to workers as an effort for employees to improve their "communication skills," rather than as a "literacy" course per se. It was offered to them as an option and all but one wanted to take it. One of the supervisors, a matai (elder) from Samoa, who has very poor English skills initially refused to participate because of fear of it belittling his social status. After about six months, he changed his mind and joined the programme.

STRUCTURE: Small group (2-3 students) tutoring.
2 hours per week (in 45-minute blocks 2-3 times per week) for one year

CURRICULUM:

- **Contextualised.** Tuition is highly contextualised. Most materials are from the workplace itself such as the company manual, which has information about the processes used in relation to the products. It uses mathsematical concepts such as fractions, and information about hazards using machinery. It is also helping forklift drivers prepare for written and oral driver's licence tests. Students seemed to like this element of it: "Training should be related to your job. If you repair pallets, training should be about repairing pallets," said one.
- **Customised materials.** Workbase created customised worksheets to assist with reading, writing and maths. Examples of maths questions include:
  1. "It takes John 45 minutes to drive to work. It takes Manu 30 minutes. By how many minutes is Manu's drive shorter than John's?"
  2. "The waste bin in the yard holds 3 tonnes (3000 kg). It costs $75 a tonne to take the waste away. The company uses 2 bins a day. How much does it cost each day to take the waste away?"
- **NQF-specific.** The curriculum is geared towards acquisition of units standards for the NQF such as unit standards 8489 (solve problems which require calculation with whole numbers) and 8491 (read and interpret information presented in tables and graphs).
- **Health and safety-focused.** Much of the curriculum focuses on topics of health and safety, but the materials are also used to develop both language and maths skills.

LEARNER PROFILE: All students are Pacific peoples, principally Samoan with some Tongan and Cook Island Maori. The total amount of formal education most of the students have received over their lifetimes averages 3-5 years. The company selected a mix of learners for the programme, most of whom have very low levels of literacy in the native language and poor English skills. A literacy needs analysis found the level of literacy and language is "very low" and "went way beyond my expectations. It was ghastly. Eighty-five percent couldn't read a graph and 70 percent couldn't fill in a holiday (annual leave) form," according to the plant manager.

FUNDING SOURCE(S): 1/3 each from the company, Skill New Zealand and the ITO.

REASONS FOR LITERARY PROGRAMME: Most workers are non-native English speakers and use their own language (Samoan) in the workplace. This has led to tension between workers and management. Poor communication skills in English make it difficult for many of the learners to be competent in workplace procedures (e.g. speaking with office staff, management and customers, or speaking on health and safety issues). One reason that contributed to the training was the union's support for it. There were five injuries in the seven months before the programme was introduced and some may have been due to language issues.

COMPANY PROFILE:

A manufacturing plant in South Auckland. As a condition of facilitating this site as a case study, Workbase (the provider) asked that the company not be identified by name.

OTHER FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS:

- **Well-trained tutor.** The teacher/tutor is well-qualified with a secondary teacher's certificate, diploma in English language teaching and a degree in mathsematics. He is currently studying for a master's degree. In addition, he has experience in Training Opportunities and polytechnic programmes.
- **Management support and involvement.** The company initiated the course and has been supportive from the beginning. It also provides the stationery, new blinds for the training room, a computer, a white board and a filing cabinet. The management is also supportive of Workbase's goal of bringing about fundamental changes in workplace practice in communication and is initiating other changes in addition to the training.
- **Focus is on "communication skills" rather than "literacy."** In addition to assisting workers in improving their skills, Workbase has standardised and simplified company forms into "plain language."
- **Convenient physical location central to but separate from the rest of the plant.** Learning occurs in its own room on-site, but removed from the noise and distractions of the "shop-floor." It is equipped with a table, chairs, computer and whiteboard.
- **Strong team atmosphere among the learners.** After getting over some initial reluctance, most of the learners are enjoying the course and camaraderie has developed among them. Some workers who are not on the course have approached management to ask to take it.

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS:

All of the students interviewed would like to come to the course every day, rather than only three days per week. All said that they want to do more training when this course ends. Several would like more of an emphasis on speaking English rather than just reading and writing. A number said they want very much to learn computer skills, which is not currently part of the curriculum.

PROFILE #4: ***TE WHARE AKO (THE HOUSE OF LEARNING) KAWERAU***

TYPE OF PROGRAMME: Workplace **COST:** $35-$40 per student per week[14]

GOAL: Assist workers in developing "enabling skills" in order to improve their participation in job-related training programmes.

TYPES OF SERVICES: Basic literacy
Te reo Maori (Maori language)
Computer instruction
CV (resume) writing
Information on and referrals to additional education and training

WORK-RELATED[15] OUTCOMES: The programme does not (but should) keep track of the number of workers who go on to further training or who get promotions.[16]

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER YEAR: About 500 (exact number not available).

STRUCTURE: On-site open learning centre for independent learning or one-to-one tutoring.

CURRICULUM:

- **Contextualised.** Tuition is contextualised, using authentic workplace documents due to the provider's (Workbase) philosophy that any effort to improve literacy and numeracy skills needs to recognise the contexts in which those skills are used.
- **One-to-one tutoring.** Tutoring is based on learners' needs and goals, which are assessed before a learning programme is agreed upon. Tutors encourage learners to be as independent as possible. When appropriate, learners are encouraged to assist each other as peer tutors.
- **Non-threatening assessment.** Workers were opposed to school-type exams, so tutors use oral rather than written assessment as appropriate. They rely heavily on self-reporting by learners, who – along with third parties – measure their own progress against learning goals. Tutors use assessment processes in line with the NQF, and learners earn unit standards.

LEARNER PROFILE:
Many of the learners have worked at the mill for 20-30 years and were hired when the job requirements centred around physical strength and practical, rather than academic skills. Learners range from 18 years to retirement age. Many left school without qualifications, often without completing three years of secondary schooling. About 50 percent of the company's employees are Maori, but the ethnicity of those who use Te Whare Ako is not recorded. Ethnic groups observed there include Maori, Pakeha, Asian and Swiss. According to a cleaner who uses Te Whare Ako regularly, "All cultures can come here whether you be black, white or yellow."

FUNDING SOURCE(S): 100% funded by the company.

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[14] Estimating the cost is very difficult because some students drop in only rarely while others have spent hundreds of hours there. The majority have not yet had sustained periods of learning there.
[15] For non-work related outcomes, see section on "Benefits to Workers."
[16] While Te Whare Ako does not track learner outcomes, the company has seen enough benefits to keep funding the programmes. Some are highlighted in "Case Study Conclusions."

REASON FOR LITERACY PROGRAMME:

Te Whare Ako was set up by the company in 1994 after the role of the shift foreman was phased out, requiring employees to take over tasks previously carried out by foremen (e.g. writing shift reports). It began with the Wood Prep Department and has gradually extended its services to all employees. The company contracts with Workbase to implement the scheme. The first step in developing it was carrying out a literacy needs analysis that considered the existing requisite skills of the job, skills that changes in the job would require (including analysis of workplace documentation), and the existing skill levels of employees. Te Whare Ako is considered one of New Zealand's foremost examples of best practice in workplace literacy training.

COMPANY PROFILE:

Norske Skog Pulp and Paper is one of New Zealand's largest manufacturing sites. It processes logs into pulp and paper products, operating 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days a year. It employs 1,200 staff who are involved in a wide range of activities including transporting and preparing logs, processing chemicals, operating machines to make chips or pulp, and making paper products, including newsprint. The company also has an extensive support infrastructure (e.g. security, medical and administrative) to support its workforce.

OTHER FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS:

- **Student focus.** Student perspectives helped develop Te Whare Ako from the beginning and workers who were potential students at Te Whare Ako served on a planning committee that developed it. In addition to giving the students a sense of ownership and therefore more enthusiasm for it, Te Whare Ako is stronger for including student ideas and suggestions.
- **Respect for learners' needs.** Initially workers wanted tutors who were not from Kawerau. As it is a small town, they did not want their neighbours and friends to know they were participating in a literacy scheme. Therefore the first tutors were not local, but commuted in from Auckland. After six months this concern had evaporated and local tutors were hired.
- **Management support and involvement.** The company allows workers to use the site during their shifts and initially arranged for back-up on shifts. All employees are allocated a minimum of 40 hours off-job training annually to pursue learning.
- **Physical location central to but separate from the rest of the plant.** Workers say it was important in the beginning "not to have to walk past the boss' office" to get there.
- **NQF assessment processes.** Tutors use a "collection of evidence" assessment model by which learners and third parties report on their gains. The emphasis is on learners providing evidence that they are ready for assessment rather than relying on the teacher for this.
- **Facilitation of other learning opportunities.** Te Whare Ako connects workers with ongoing education and training, and has evolved into a "one-stop" centre for training. According to a custodial worker, "If we think there's a course we want, we tell them and they'll organise it. If they don't offer it, they'll find a place nearby." Examples of courses taken off-site are: truck licence, forklift licence, basic recruitment and workplace assessors.
- **Helpful tutors.** One worker said, "What really makes this a good place is having the right teachers. They're lovely people…they listen…and help you with whatever you want to learn."
- **Focus on "communications" rather than "literacy,"** due to stigma attached to "literacy."

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS: Learners were overwhelming positive and would like to spend more time there. There was some concern that only about half the workers utilise Te Whare Ako, and students were interested in reaching out to those who don't: "A lot of my mates, my cousins can't read and write, but they're too nervous to come in," said one.

"The world's changing all the time and you've got to keep up with it. If you don't, you just fall behind further and further."

-- Robert, 42, adult literacy student

CASE STUDY CONCLUSIONS

Interviews with students, teachers, administrators and others involved in the case studies yielded six general conclusions.

MOTIVATION

CONCLUSION 1: *People have a wide variety of reasons for enrolling – and remaining – in vocational literacy programmes. These include: the desire to get a job or promotion; family and personal reasons; the desire to learn computer skills; general desire to learn; accessibility, openness, and convenience of programmes; opportunity to learn at their own pace; encouragement from management and co-workers; and the need to improve safety on the job.*

- **DESIRE TO GET A JOB OR PROMOTION.** Marie, a mother of four, enrolled in Training Opportunities after "I went on about 30 job interviews and didn't get them. I had trouble with reading, spelling and maths." Paulette also wants a job: "I left when I was 18 and got married and raised a family so I've never worked. I want to get a job. I want to be a florist but I need to be able to read names of flowers…When I first started here I didn't know how to read the word 'and.' I've read 32 books this year."

  Barry, in his 40s, who was referred to his literacy course by Workbridge, "couldn't get a job because of my reading problem. When I first came I couldn't read or write nothing. I couldn't even write my name. I was working but was made redundant because I couldn't do the paperwork. I was applying for a job in forestry and road maintenance but there was too much paperwork. I want to try to get in a factory."

  Glenda, also unemployed, enrolled because rather than work as a housekeeper or kitchen hand (as she has previously), she wants to look after children or animals and needs better skills and credentials in order to do so. "I had a job offer moss-packing, but it was low-paid. I want to catch up to scratch with my reading, spelling and maths." Wendy, 27, was taking a hospitality course at a local high school "but reading and writing was slowing me down so I got fed up and left [and enrolled in Training Opportunities instead]." Allister has another reason: "I took this course to improve my education so I can get back in the army." Peter, age 42, said,

  > I left school at 15. I was always in special classes. I couldn't read anything. I went looking for a job but only got short hours and not enough money to survive. I found when I went to job interviews that when they found out I couldn't read I was stuffed. I got a job dipping paintbrushes, but pay wasn't that good. I've also done landscaping, commercial fishing and rubbish removal. I could get a low paid job but I wouldn't be able to get anywhere. I want to work for myself and earn enough for the week.

Paul, age 43, has a similar motivation: "I tried to get a job but it was hard to sell myself to the people. No one would give me a chance. I did not have confidence in myself to do the job…I am going to go on learning. It opens up a whole new world of opportunity for me to get a job."

Raewyn, a mother of seven who is currently unemployed, also has career aspirations: "I've worked with the elderly in a day care center since I was 17, been a cleaner and a taxi driver…From here [Training Opportunities], I'm going to be a budget advisor or retail and sales. Retail and sales has always been my dream."

Fenumiai, a factory worker, agreed to participate in his company's literacy programme because he wanted to better understand how the business operates: "I took it because they said it would…help you learn how everything works in the business and what the company aim is. A few guys who've missed out on the class, I think they regret it…[Now] everybody wants to get on the programme."

Eugene, an unemployed Training Opportunities student explains,

> We're all hoping at the end of the day to get jobs. At the end of the day, that's what we're all working towards: education for working and for your own personal wealth and family and personal needs…My greatest enthusiasm now is telling people what I've learned here. That's my wealth.

- **FAMILY AND PERSONAL REASONS.** Sioeli, a Samoan who completed the first form (comparable to about 10th grade) and is a factory worker, wants to set an example for his children: "I want to make an example for my kids by coming to school. I'm trying to show my kids to work hard in school. I am trying hard to learn…the long words…[and] how to use and speak the language." He is also showing his children that learning is worth it even when it is not convenient. After working the 10:00 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. shift, he goes home to see his children off to school (since his wife leaves for work at 4:00 a.m.), returns to work for the literacy course from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., then finally returns home to sleep after a 12-hour day.

  Theresa, who had left school at 15, enrolled in Training Opportunities because she wanted to help her 6 year-old with her homework but was unable to read her daughter's book. "It was really frustrating and I was getting brassed off." After 6 months in a literacy scheme, "I can help with her work – spelling and stuff." Marie, had similar motivation: "I couldn't help my kids with their homework." According to a Te Whare Ako tutor, reasons like these are common: "For a lot of them getting help with literacy is for their kids, so they can help them or their grandkids."

  Stuart, in his 40s, had personal reasons for wanting to improve his literacy skills: "My whole self-esteem was really down before I came here. I got sick of being embarrassed about it. I've read one book in my life."

- **DESIRE TO LEARN COMPUTER SKILLS.** Mike, a Samoan in his 40s, enrolled in Training Opportunities to learn about computers: "I'd never touched one." Joe, a Maori, warehouse worker, said: " A new computer system was installed last October that is supposed to be simpler but there's some jargon on there that we don't necessarily need. So we came to Te Whare Ako to learn computer skills." Mandu adds: "I worked with people who'd been here 30 years and didn't know how they were going to go from manual work to computers. They were scared." Tony, a computer applications specialist, agrees:

> As these new technologies come out, there's adaptation. If we can't deliver that training to the operators – if they don't use it and understand it – the tool is going to be misused...which is going to relate to wrong reports, which is going to relate to wrong decisions. For them to make the right decisions, training is a key part of that.

David, 46, a Training Opportunities student, also wants to learn about computers:

> I worked 18 years in dispatch and driving a forklift. I sort of didn't need to read and write, then I got laid off. Now I need to read and write to get another job. I'd never touched a computer before I got here. Now you can't keep me off it.

- **GENERAL DESIRE TO LEARN.** Ina, who came to New Zealand in the 1970s from the Cook Islands at age 19, said: "I'm here to learn how to write and read. That's my main goal. Before, I couldn't read books, even a baby book. Now I'm starting to." Misi, a South Auckland factory worker, said, "I want to learn everything. I want to learn more than that."

- **ACCESSIBILITY, OPENNESS AND CONVENIENCE.** Part of Te Whare Ako's appeal to workers is its openness to all. According to Hiria, a cleaner,

  > In the old days the higher ones were selected for training but a lot of people couldn't read or write...This is open to anyone. Even the bosses come here. The boss wants to learn too. In here, everybody's on the same level. You don't feel put down.

  Mandu, a shift worker who has been with his company for 15 years, has completed a number of qualifications at his literacy programme, including Level 4 pulp and paper exams and a diploma in training the trainer. He said, "I came here to finish off two of my [NZQA] exams. They've got the skills that you need. It's not 'you've failed,' 'you're useless,' [instead] these people will help you look outside the square." Convenience is also a factor: "A lot [of us] finished school at 15 and came to the mill right away. Now [we] want to upskill. This was an easy way to do it."

- **OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AT THEIR OWN PACE.** Another aspect of the appeal is the availability of one-to-one learning: According to Hiria, "Some of our people have trouble reading and they like to come here where there is space for one-to-one without everyone hearing." In addition to meeting with learners at Te Ware Ako, tutors also assist employees at their workstations. According to Tony, a computer applications specialist, "It helps that tutors come to the worksite. That, to myself, is a critical thing." A related issue may be that the tutors recognise that different people have different learning styles. According to Cheryl, a tutor, "some learn by watching you, others by reading and others by... being coached step-by-step. Others learn in bits and pieces. Others learn by you just giving them the basics and they come to you when they're stuck." This sort of customised instruction assists learners in learning in a comfortable manner and in going at their own pace.

- **ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MANAGEMENT AND CO-WORKERS.** The fact that managers actively support their participation makes a big difference in motivating employees at workplace-based literacy programmes. "When your big boss says you've got an hour or two there, we make time to be here. [It helps] having that push from the boss to say have a couple of hours," said one student. At Te Whare Ako, management also shows its support by attending its ceremonies, which reinforces that message that it supports the learning centre. Peer support also seems to be a factor: "We work as a team. If someone needs to come here we encourage them and cover for them," she adds.

- **NEEDS TO IMPROVE SAFETY ON THE JOB.** Safety was another motivating factor for some employees. According to Maraea, who has worked on Tasman's custodial staff for 23 years, "You can't just not be able to read. They say you don't need to know how to read and write to be a cleaner but you do. You need to read the label of hazardous chemicals."

CONCLUSION 2: *Businesses have a variety of reasons for establishing on-site workplace literacy programmes, including the emerging recognition that literacy affects quality and improves their bottom line.*

- **EMERGING RECOGNITION THAT LITERACY AFFECTS QUALITY.** According to the National Operations Manager of the South Auckland factory, "We struck a barrier. We weren't getting good quality...A manager observed many people didn't understand what we were asking them to do. We weren't getting quality." This had a number of ramifications. For instance,

> [With] health and safety...they broke the rules continuously. Customer service was non-existent. Through union negotiation, staff were telling us they were committed to quality, safety and customer service...[but] 80 percent of the message was not getting across because of this [language] barrier. Staff who were bilingual had to spend a lot of time translating...It was a terrible atmosphere. It was 'them' and 'us.'

He describes the evolution of his understanding of the importance of literacy:

> Up to 3-4 years ago we were quite an autocratic production company. It didn't require a lot of skill. Our recruitment policy was...go out and find people who can hammer a nail...[We said] this is the way you do it. Don't deviate or you're fired. Now, we ask them to think about how and why and find a better way. We're asking people to *think* about their job. They've got to communicate ideas back. This requires trust, participation and being able to communicate. That is why we decided on literacy. We need to have the programme that allows people to buy into that vision. I can't motivate anybody. They can only motivate themselves.

Finally, the factory is part of a global organisation of 31 companies, including some in both the U.S. and Australia. Therefore, "We want to adopt some of the technology that some our other [international] plants are using," according to a manager. "Our next step is computers and technological literacy. That's something that's going to hit our depots. We want to start introducing radio frequency technology and hand-held computers. Technology will be the next quantum leap."

Te Whare Ako managers are candid that before it was established, they faced the choice: Retain workers who they recognised as having literacy needs or outsource for new workers. According to one manager, "Literacy and numeracy is an issue for adult Maori men here...Books and academia are not really their thing. There was a gap – training manuals, ISO, NQF accreditation – in a way these people were being left behind."

- **INCREASED UNDERSTANDING THAT LITERACY IMPROVES THEIR BOTTOM LINE.** At Norske Skog (then known as Tasman), deciding to create Te Whare Ako ultimately it came down to an economic decision: "The bottom line is money. A substantial portion of the company's revenue goes into training – maybe 2-3 percent." A Human Resources Advisor said the company saw that the skills of employees related to the company's growth. Another manager explains, "It's almost like a chicken and egg. Old mindset people came to work to perform

tasks. There's an increased awareness that it's not the tasks that lead to productivity; it's the person performing the task."

According to Peter Milton, a Departmental Co-ordinator, "The days of leave your brain at the gate are long gone. Now we want you to bring your brain with you." Susan Reid of Workbase, who played a key role in establishing Te Whare Ako, agrees: "The only way they are going to keep pace in this world is to have people who are trained. The only way to do that is through the underpinning skills."

BARRIERS

CONCLUSION 3: *Learning opportunities are not available to all adults who want to participate in a vocational literacy course. For those to whom it is available, barriers can prevent them from taking full advantage of it. These barriers include negative experiences in secondary school that have either convinced them they're "dumb" or make them wary of school; initial fear and suspicion of the literacy course; family issues; lack of time; and age issues. Obstacles to the pre-employment programmes were all related to lack of programme capacity (i.e. too many students for too few courses). Many of the students at both Christchurch Polytechnic and Hagley Learning Centre were on long waiting lists – for up to three and a half years – before starting the course, and many others are still on those waiting lists.*

- **NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL.** Rarely do literacy issues develop in isolation. Generally, there are other factors in peoples' lives that exacerbate their learning difficulties and prompt their dropping out of school at a young age. Theresa, in her mid-30's, who left school at 15, said, "I slept through the system. I didn't really learn anything at school. I was the rebelling one. Teachers called me a 'dumb cow.' After you're told that so many times you start to believe it. I was bluffing my way through life so I decided to go back to school and found a two-year waiting list. I went on unemployment for a year and then got a job filling ice cream bottles then picked fruit and worked in a dairy."

  Wendy, 27, has a learning disability that was not diagnosed in school: "When I was in school I always had a problem with reading and writing. I'm dyslexic and nobody at school ever found out. I'm not blaming them, but I just went through the system not being educated."

  Marie didn't get the individual attention she needed in school. "When I was in school there were [too many] in a class and there wasn't time for the teacher to give everyone attention... I was in a special class. There was always a lot of interruption and disruption. I had trouble with reading, spelling and maths. Here, it's not a disruptive place. Everyone listens."

  Nevil, 36, left school at 17: "There were 30-35 kids in a class. Teachers sort of help the smart ones. People like myself they don't bother about. I didn't pass my exams. I left for a labouring job earning $120/week."

  Pete, 21, who left school at 17, said, "In a school environment I was just told what to do and not asked to think. They didn't have much time for you. The teacher didn't have the time of day for me. Her heart just wasn't in it. There were 30 of us in the class. It felt like she didn't want anything to do with me. I was in a special unit so they just mothered me, which wasn't what I needed. I wasn't thinking for myself. I never used to read. I'm beginning to read more. I just finished a book this weekend, which is very rare for me."

  Frank, a Training Opportunities student, said, "When I was in school, I was a troubled kid – getting in fights. I was dyslexic and nobody picked it up until I was 16. The tutors here picked it up right away."

Stuart, a father of five, said teachers recognised his reading problem so they sent him to a reading clinic at another school 3 times per week. "I got behind in other classes. The teachers wouldn't let me in English class because my reading and spelling was so bad. Another girl got thrown out of class too so we went to smoke dope instead. I left school at the end of 4th form (age 15) and went into an apprenticeship."

- **INITIAL FEAR AND SUSPICION.** Many employees at the factory were afraid to take the course initially. Fenumiai explained, "Back then, they were afraid to [take the class]. They were scared people would…[think] they're dumb. But now they're the dumb ones. They regret not taking it."

  Their tutor found outright hostility towards his programme at first – not by the workers who were participating in it, but by those who were not (i.e. the receptionists, who were not included because they didn't demonstrate the same learning gaps.) Over time, this changed: "I think they've come to realise that it's helping everyone, including them…[for example] people completing their leave forms themselves and speaking English." Of the students who did take the course, it took awhile for everyone to "get comfortable." Some were scared it would be too hard, "so I told them we'd go at their pace. They're progressing well."

  Many employees were also skeptical of Te Whare Ako initially. When it first opened, "There was a lot of suspicion about what they're up to…I think people were scared to come…it was sort of intimidating," according to Maraea. A shift worker concurs: "I thought it was a lot of company rubbish. I changed my mind when I was in rehab and started learning things I thought I'd never learn." According to Mandu, "Where a lot of people were frightened to try new things and were scared it would be too hard…it helped a lot of people open their eyes. A lot of people who were afraid to come." Ina said, "A lot of my mates, my cousins, can't read and write, but they're too nervous to come in."

- **FAMILY ISSUES.** Dawn, originally from Gore, said, "My old man pulled me out of school when I was five. I don't know why." She didn't return to school until her 30s, when she enrolled in Training Opportunities. Ann, age 50, left school at 15, when she had to help support her family after her father had an accident that left him unable to work. Raewyn, who was "pulled out of school at 15 by my father who had raped me and was scared I was pregnant." Ina, now a Training Opportunities student, grew up in the Cook Islands and left school at age 12 in order to get a job planting oranges and bananas.

- **LACK OF TIME.** While workers often drop into Te Whare Ako during the day, many find that they want to spend more time there than their jobs permit. In these cases, they have started coming to Te Whare Ako on their own time, such as days off, before or after work or instead of lunch. For instance, Hiria comes about an hour a day and often works through lunch in order to have more time at Te Whare Ako. Another worker, who wished to be anonymous, said he comes on his own time once or twice a week for two hours at a time.

- **AGE-RELATED ISSUES.** Another issue mentioned relates to age: "A lot of fellas here are 40 or 50 years old and haven't studied since they been in school," according to a forklift driver. "Our old people used to find it hard to learn from people who were younger…[with] friction between people who had been here 40 years and 15 years. After a while at Te Whare Ako this changed: the seniority thing doesn't matter anymore. Over here the pressure's off. Now they just want to learn."

CONCLUSION 4: *The primary barrier that prevents companies from establishing workplace-based literacy programmes is lack of funding assistance.*

- **FUNDING.** The National Operations Manager of the factory explained, "The ITO was not initially willing to fund this. They focus on industry training, not 'literacy.' We have a limited budget. We argued with the ITO to work out allowing some basic literacy [so it] funds 15 people for a year [but] about 60 need it." Had this manager not spent a significant amount of time seeking out additional funding, the course would not have been offered: "I started ringing around...and eventually cottoned on to Skill New Zealand." The course is funded one-third each by the company, the ITO and Skill New Zealand, costing a total of $70,000 per year for 1,250 hours of training. This averages to about $3,000 per participating employee, and does not include about $15,000 in "lost time," which is absorbed and "seems to be paying for itself," according to the manager.

BENEFITS TO WORKERS

CONCLUSION 5: *Participants in vocational literacy courses benefit both on- and off-job. Outcomes include increased confidence, love of learning and interest in further education and training; setting an example for other family members/improving family relationships; improved job performance, improved promotion opportunities and increased compliance with safety measures; and acquisition of "life skills."*

- **BUILDS CONFIDENCE, LOVE OF LEARNING AND INTEREST IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING.** Similar benefits were cited by workers at both workplace-based and pre-employment programmes. "Coming here has given me the confidence that I can still learn...I'm a grandmother now, but my brain is still very much alive and I can keep learning. It wakes the brain up again," according to Marea, a custodial worker. Fenumiai, a factory worker, agrees: "Overall, it has woken up my brain, which was at rest for a very long time. It helps me keep my brain occupied."

  Mandu, a shift worker, explained, "They've got this learning thing inside them now and want to know more. The knowledge comes trickling back. No one else wanted to bring it out of them." An anonymous worker adds, "I can look at most things now and know what it means...My wife's noticed my improvement. According to Misi, "This is the first training I've done. I want more training and more learning...It's good for me."

  Wendy, a Training Opportunities student, has improved her confidence: "I'm really capable. For so long, I thought 'I'm a bit of a dummy.' This has helped my confidence. Six months ago I would have thought 'no way.'" John said, "I'm doing another course after this – Impact Training to get you in the workforce. I've never had a real paid job. If I earn money, then I could afford a holiday." Pete said, "Next, I'll get some training. I wouldn't have been able to do training before without the basic skills." According to Raewyn, "I can go away from here knowing I've got a better education, unit standards and my CV. I enjoy going home every day knowing more than I did the day before."

- **SETS AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS/IMPROVING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.** An important benefit for many vocational literacy participants is increased awareness of the benefits of education to their children. After participating in Te Whare Ako, Maraea encouraged her daughter, a solo mum who left school at an early age, to return to school. She had encouraged her daughter to do so for years, but her daughter didn't listen until her mother

was taking the literacy course. "I said, 'If I can, you can' and she thought, 'I can't really let Mum beat me, and returned to school."

Raewyn, who has seven children, is now able to help her children with their homework:

> I take a lot of homework home. Me and my children all haul out our homework and do it around the table at night. I help them. All three of my children are doing as well as their mum is. I go on school trips, volunteer with school. I told my daughter she's not leaving school until she's 18 and has a job behind her. She started in a special needs class but got moved up. Now she's on the computer.

Eugene, a Training Opportunities student, says,

> I want to achieve something and be noticed by someone. When you don't hear that – or never hear that – it makes a difference. Even when you get a little bit it makes you want more…It sort of rubs off on my 10 year old boy. I've taken more of an interest in my own life and will sit down and hear what he has to say. I'll read to him and help him with his homework. I wouldn't have done that before. I was avoiding being with him before.

Mandu adds that Te Whare Ako "helps them get their paper in a frame (certificate) so their kids will look at them differently." A warehouse worker agrees, "Your job is not just a job anymore. Now you have more say in your job. If you achieve something good in your job, it reflects back to your family."

"I feel like I'm a better mother, wife, grandmother," said another worker, who first learned computer skills at Te Whare Ako. "At home, my youngest is 10, he got on the computer. It's really good because him and I can relate to things now. I wouldn't have known what the heck was going on." Hiria agrees, "I can relate to my young ones at school now." Ina, father of eight, is learning to read through Training Opportunities and is enjoying reading with his youngest daughter: "This is the place for me. The longer you stay on the course, the better you get. My eight year old is catching up. She's better at reading than me. We read books together. I make sure she does her homework."

- **IMPROVES JOB PERFORMANCE/OPPORTUNITIES.** A factory worker, Misi, said that his workplace-based literacy course has "really helped me with this job, especially as a team leader. It's helped with filling out forms, receipts and other paperwork…At my old job I never saw the paperwork – just clocked in and clocked out." His co-worker, Mal, agrees:

> The class itself is really useful to me. It's improved my knowledge and understanding. I'm getting a chance to know what the boss wants and to do my job right…[I] find out my rights and understand the system. Before, if I went to my boss and he said no, it would have shut me down. Now I know I can go to his boss. I'll take this with me beyond the class.

Marie is also able to do her job better: "I'm a nurse's aid and I've got to be able to spell properly." Mona, who drives a forklift said, "It's helped me in my job because sometimes when a truck comes in you count how many pallets are being returned. Training has helped my maths and English…write and spelling the words…Doing this training helped me a lot…[with] my attitude."

One of his colleagues Mark, noted the improvements in his relationship with his supervisor:

> It gives you more opportunities between you and the boss. For me personally, it's helped my growth in the workplace. I'm getting more opportunities to do more stuff, like [the boss] is seeking me out to do things. I've been here for one year but am doing more than some people who've been here six years. Hours in the training class are an investment. In the long term, we can give back more…depending on what we learn in the classes…It will help the company. An idea can come from in here that will benefit the company millions of dollars.

For those who don't have jobs, such as Training Opportunities students, vocational literacy helps their employment prospects. For example, Mike said, "[After this], I'll get myself a good course in computers, then get myself a good job."

Eugene says Training Opportunities has helped his job search. "Going to places and applying for jobs is something I'd never have done before. Now I have the confidence to go into any company. If they put a form in front of me, I can fill it out."

- **IMPROVES PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES.** Improving skills opens up opportunities for advancement. "I think it's helped a lot of people open up their eyes about applying for other jobs [at the mill] when they open up…now knowing how to do CV's," says Mandu. "It opens up that possibility to apply for another job," according to one cleaner. A shift worker adds, "If I were to leave this mill, I can take my qualifications to another mill." Mark, a factory worker, passed up another job with a competitor partly because of the literacy programme at his company:

  > You tend to get more respect and more loyalty to the company. [After being offered another job], I decided to stay because I want to get the class and the people here are really great. We help out each other with whatever we can help out with. And another reason I'm staying is promotion…it's just a matter of time.

- **INCREASED COMPLIANCE WITH SAFETY MEASURES.** Sanelive, a factory worker, is more aware of the importance of safety as a result of his workplace-based literacy training: "I've learned about safety. Now I use my glasses and gloves."

- **ACQUISITION OF "LIFE SKILLS."** Mona, a factory worker said: "It's helped me for my family…[to] understand how to do the power bill, pay rent, the bank account, anything. This is helping." Theresa, a Training Opportunities student, agrees, "I can actually read the label on a medicine bottle now. I used to just memorise what the chemist said. It's easier being able to read. I can read labels on packets at the supermarket." Barry reads the newspaper: "Now I can read bits and pieces of papers – word books and puzzles and the newspaper. I've read 9 books."

According to one tutor,

> Learners, through training, are able to change their thought patterns and are able to give themselves authority. In the classroom environment you step out of your job and think and ask questions about solving problems. If you're on a production line 18 hours a day you don't have that opportunity necessarily.

John, a Training Opportunities trainee, said, "My reading has improved. I read the paper every morning. I never did that before. I'm reading short stories." Nevil is also putting his new skills to good use: "I'm writing my life story." Sue adds that by learning to read, "When I'm an old lady I won't have to sit and stare at the walls."

CONCLUSION 6: *Vocational literacy courses can offer many benefits to companies, including reducing ACC payments; improving communication between workers and management; improving job performance; increasing job satisfaction; enabling the company to better keep up with technology; improving the culture of the company; and increasing employee loyalty.*

- **REDUCING ACC PAYMENTS AND LOSS OF TIME INJURIES.** According to a manager at Norske Skog, Peter Milton, it benefits the company financially when injured workers participate in training at Te Whare Ako rather than recovering at home. This is because premiums are reduced if injured employees are on the premises in training. In the first year, the company saved in ACC payments more than double the total amount it spent on Te Whare Ako. In other words, Te Whare Ako paid for itself and then some. The South Auckland factory found that Loss of Time Injuries (LTI) have improved significantly since the programme began. A manager at one of the site visits noted, "Safety has definitely improved. Before [the literacy programme] there were 12 'incidents' per month. Now it's down to eight."

- **IMPROVING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN WORKERS AND MANAGEMENT.** Mandu credits his workplace-based literacy programme with "breaking the barrier down between managers and workers." For example, "If we don't get what we need from the boss, we ring up the manager. We have no qualms about it," according to Maraea. Hiria adds, "Now you can relate to the boss. It's lifted everybody's confidence…I do presentations to the management." Both managers from the South Auckland factory also noted "a break in the barriers between management and the workforce." The other manager mentioned that negotiating with unions is less acrimonious now that they can communicate directly rather than using a translator.

  A related benefit observed by the manager at one of the site visits is that workers are e-mailing him more, which allows issues to come up that they might be reluctant to bring up face-to-face.

- **IMPROVING JOB PERFORMANCE.** Workers gave numerous examples of how participating in workplace-based literacy training had improved their job performance. For instance, Hiria noted, "I took what I learned back to my group – budgeting and purchasing spreadsheets. Before, I didn't even know how to operate a computer." Another shift worker commented, "I definitely am doing my job better. I take more care on it. We're trying to get the best out we can." According to Mandu,

  > I, for one, look at things differently. Before if the pump broke down, I just waited. Now we try to figure out what to do…I see the big picture. We've got people …who used to just know about their machine. Now they know how the whole pulp works." A manager, Stephanie, notes, "When people learned how and why things worked, that's when you increased the ownership."

- **INCREASING JOB SATISFACTION.** Te Whare Ako seems to have made a tremendous difference in terms of employees' job satisfaction. "Before [Te Whare Ako] we would just come, work, and go home…In gaining knowledge, I've gained confidence and pride in what I do. I'm not ashamed to be a cleaner," according to Hiria. Another cleaner adds,

> There was no satisfaction in what we were doing. Before, the foreman did everything but it didn't always work for us. Now…[we] each develop [our] own expertise. [After] getting back in the learning mode after being out of school for so long…there's more fulfilment in what we do…I'm proud of the mill and what it's achieved.

- **ENABLING THE COMPANY TO BETTER KEEP UP WITH TECHNOLOGY.** A manager, Mary, says, "Some of our guys didn't even know what a computer looked like, much less how to switch it on…and the difference in what they did then and now is amazing. Now they're doing graph work on the computer and writing logs." According to another manager,

  > Computer literacy is critical. IT (information technology) plays a huge part of process control. IT's not pushing a button to start, it's done from a central control. That goes further down the track to transfer of knowledge between departments with e-mail…I expect more communication with sister companies. It's happening already at a supervisor/management level. The challenge is to bring it down to the operator level. That will be a competitive advantage.

- **IMPROVING THE CULTURE OF THE COMPANY.** "People are phoning up when they wouldn't do that before. Absenteeism is better. People smile at you more. The customer base has grown and quality standards have sky-rocketed," according to a manager of a South Auckland factory. A human resources advisor at Norske Skog says many of the benefits are unseen and unmeasurable, but real. For instance, "You can't measure someone poking their head in, next time coming in and having training…next time there's a change they respond differently and are willing to do something new." Hiria says, "You have a lot of different workers coming in from different departments, they used to look down on us…now they've mellowed." Marea adds, "Before, this was such a staunch, male-dominated place." Mandu agrees, "Te Whare Ako changes how people look at their jobs. A lot of people have gone away from the macho image…Talking in their own language (Maori) made a difference. The atmosphere is more relaxed."

- **INCREASING EMPLOYEE LOYALTY.** Joe, who works in the warehouse says, "I'm glad to work for Tasman because they give us opportunities. I'm 50 years old…I want to know technology or I'll get left behind." Marea adds, "You're not just a number. You know you've got a bit of the pie too…It makes us feel that we're a part of this company."

So what does all of this mean? Clearly there are important implications for both public policy – both for adult literacy policy and other major policy initiatives. These are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

CHAPTER 5: PUBLIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter synthesises findings from case studies, site visits, interviews with experts across New Zealand, presentations at conferences, books, articles and international research. All contribute to the recommendations outlined below. Findings converge around one overarching conclusion: the extent of New Zealand's literacy need outweighs its current capacity to address it. Improving the literacy sector's capacity is not as daunting as it may sound, however, because a strong foundation is already in place. With appropriate government assistance and funding, the literacy sector is poised to move to the next level of growth and development.

As discussed in *Chapter 2*, the IALS found that approximately 200,000 adults in New Zealand have difficulty using even basic printed materials in daily life. The number may have grown in the three years since the IALS was published because, like the U.S., the percentage of secondary school leavers with no qualifications has hovered around 20 percent for the past decade. In New Zealand, this translates into roughly 10,000 early school leavers per year, meaning that the number of adults with literacy needs may be closer to 230,000. While there are some very good programmes assisting about 17,000 adults with literacy needs annually, the provision of services available is not nearly enough. Waiting lists underscore this shortfall. The bottom line is that fewer than 10 percent of adults identified as having literacy needs participate in adult literacy programmes annually, and many programmes are so short (12 weeks or less) that learning gains are unlikely to be substantial.

The literacy sector was created, and for the most part has evolved and grown despite – rather than because of – the government, where leadership in this area has been lacking. To date, the government has offered no vision for adult literacy and only negligible funding. The Ministry of Education, which has responsibility for adult literacy, should begin to fill the government's leadership void by taking the following 3 steps:

- Create a bold vision for literacy that includes both long-term and short-term goals for building the capacity and quality of the literacy sector.
- Develop a comprehensive adult literacy strategy to achieve the vision that reflects the best thinking of New Zealanders from across government and the literacy field. Ensure that the new strategy complements related education and training policies (and vice versa) and integrate literacy into other policies as appropriate.
- Substantially increase adult literacy funding, allocating new monies in ways that build on current innovations and successes *and* invest in an adult literacy infrastructure.

Meeting these three goals would propel the field forward and help ensure that the 160,000 low-skilled adults already in the workforce and the 10,000 school leavers without qualifications each year have access to the upskilling they need in the future.

There is real potential for meaningful improvement because, first of all, the Ministry of Education says it is committed to addressing adult literacy and is in the process of developing a strategy. Secondly, "New Zealand has a small, intimate political system in which a few like-minded and determined Cabinet ministers and public servants can move mountains." (James, 1999: 5). Cabinet ministers, including Trevor Mallard and his associate ministers of education, have expressed

interest in adult literacy. If they follow through on their interest, the field is poised and ready to take significant leaps forward.

In addition to an adult literacy strategy, it is also imperative that the government and schools step up efforts to prevent the schoolchildren of today from becoming the adult literacy students of the future. Four steps could help reduce the pool of adult literacy students from growing:

- Encouraging, or even requiring, students to remain in school until they have achieved basic qualifications. Most of the adult literacy students interviewed for this report left school at or before age 15 with few or no qualifications.
- Providing teacher trainees and current teachers in primary and secondary schools with more training on learning disabilities, especially on how to identify them.
- Reducing class size. Many of the adult literacy students interviewed said large classes (up to 40 students) in school prevented their teachers from giving them as much assistance as they needed.
- Making sure all students have access to and instruction on computers, so the "digital divide" narrows rather than grows.

CORE ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE ADULT LITERACY STRATEGY

Research conducted for this report suggests that there are five obstacles that prevent the adult literacy field from fully addressing the needs identified by the IALS:

1. Lack of a strong and co-ordinated adult literacy infrastructure, which affects the field's capacity and quality.
2. Limited quality assurance measures/programme accountability, including no standards or widely-accepted means of measuring learning gains (i.e. assessment tools) in literacy programmes and very little research or even basic data on literacy students' learning gains.
3. Few professional development opportunities for teachers and tutors.
4. Inadequate funding for adult literacy, which affects issues 1,2, and 3.
5. Marginalisation of literacy in key policy frameworks (such as the National Qualifications Framework and the Industry Training Strategy) and initiatives (such as Closing the Gaps).

All five obstacles can be traced to the fact that New Zealand lacks a national vision for adult literacy. Such a vision should be the foundation for an adult literacy strategy that addresses each of these obstacles. In addition to the strategy itself, a unified commitment to it from all stakeholders – both in and out of government – is equally necessary.

Obstacle 1: LACK OF A STRONG AND CO-ORDINATED ADULT LITERACY INFRASTRUCTURE

Lack of consensus among both the literacy field and government officials on what literacy is, why it is important and how to best address it, has contributed to the problem of no infrastructure for adult literacy. This has had a severe impact on its capacity to address adult literacy needs. While there have been a number of responses by various government departments to literacy over the years, they have varied in terms of both the definition of literacy and the response, and have not reflected an understanding of the depth or complexity of the issue. Most have focused on short-term courses designed to quickly lift literacy levels. (Literacy Aotearoa, 1999). Many have focused on only one strand of literacy at the expense of the others, thus exacerbating tensions in the sector and reducing collaboration. The absence of any overarching structure or system has left the sector fragmented, underfunded and without capacity to address the adult literacy needs demonstrated by the IALS. A co-ordinated system of school, community and workplace providers who share the goal of improving literacy is needed.

Action: The government should make adult literacy a public policy priority.

The Labour-Alliance Government recognised the importance of upskilling in its campaign materials in the last election. One campaign document, "21st Century Skills: Labour's Training Strategy" includes elements related to literacy:

> New Zealand skill levels by world standards are low. Other countries are rapidly moving ahead of us. We need a co-ordinated strategy that lifts skill levels throughout the workforce, and encourages skills that benefit the New Zealand economy as a whole as well as particular individuals. (21st Century Skills, 1999: 2).

Part of Labour's proposed solution is increasing opportunities for all New Zealanders to upskill and retrain throughout their lives. Key features of its proposed policy include adequate resourcing of the sector, including the development of a reliable funding mechanism. (Pathways and Networks, 1999).

To its credit, the Ministry of Education acknowledges that a government policy for adult literacy is needed and is in the process of crafting a strategy that it hopes to implement next year. According to the Ministry of Education, "the Government currently lacks a clear and coherent adult literacy strategy. Its response to the issue of low adult literacy skill levels has been formulated largely on an ad hoc basis. The results of the IALS have not yet been translated into policy or funding priorities." (Ministry of Education, 1999c: 4). The literacy sector has been rigorously pushing for such a strategy.

Necessary elements of an adult literacy strategy include the following:

- A vision for creating an adult literacy *system* (i.e. co-ordinating the various fragmented efforts and creating a true literacy infrastructure that will move the field from the education margins to the mainstream).
- Concrete, achievable targets for what New Zealand needs to be achieve over a period of years, such as: "By the year 2010, x number of adults will have advanced from Level 1 to Level 2 of the IALS.
- A well-constructed plan for achieving these targets that builds on current best practices and fosters future innovations.
- A substantial increase in funding related to the vision and plan, *not* simply a minor redistribution of current funding.
- An appropriate funding mechanism for achieving the vision plan (i.e. *not* simply trying to force a square peg into a round hole by forcing literacy funding to adapt to the tertiary or secondary school funding model).
- An evaluation component that leads to a wide range of appropriate documented outcomes of what literacy achieves and a plan for disseminating this information.

Action: Government agencies and national literacy organisations need to do a better job collaborating on literacy.

A related issue is lack of co-ordination and collaboration among and within government agencies. Several ministers have adult literacy related to their portfolio. Like the literacy field itself, they seem to define literacy differently. For instance, Associate Minister of Education Lianne Dalziel, who is responsible for community education issues, seems to see literacy as a community education issue. On the other hand, Associate Minister of Education Steve Maharey, who is responsible for industry training, seems to view it as it affects industry and has more interest in workplace literacy issues. Others with an interest and central roles to play are Minister of Education Trevor Mallard and Minister of Maori Affairs/Associate Minister of Education Parekura Horomia. "We have some clear positive signals from this government," according to Paul Lister from the Ministry of Education. "All four Ministers are asking for more information on literacy." (Lister, 2000).

More collaboration is also needed among government agencies with interest and expertise in, and responsibility for, adult literacy. One example of where this is needed is between the Ministry of Education and Skill New Zealand. A positive development in this area initiated by the Ministry of Education is creation of an adult literacy task force within government. It could include the following: Ministry of Education, Skill New Zealand, Department of Labour, Department of Work and Income, New Zealand Qualifications Authority, Ministry of Maori Affairs, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Department of Immigration, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, a representative from the Closing the Gaps committee and others. This suggestion has excellent potential and could go a long way towards improving co-ordination and collaboration within government.

Similar obstacles exist at the organisational level where the two key literacy organisations, Literacy Aotearoa and Workbase have different definitions of literacy and somewhat philosophical underpinnings of their work. Community-based and workplace-based programmes have somewhat different understandings of what literacy is, why it is important and how to best assist adults in achieving their literacy goals. Finding common ground and focusing on areas that they agree upon is the next step in improving co-ordination and collaboration and, ultimately, building a true adult literacy infrastructure. The new Coalition for Literacy being initiated by Workbase, the Industry Training Federation and the Association of Polytechnics of New Zealand also has excellent potential.

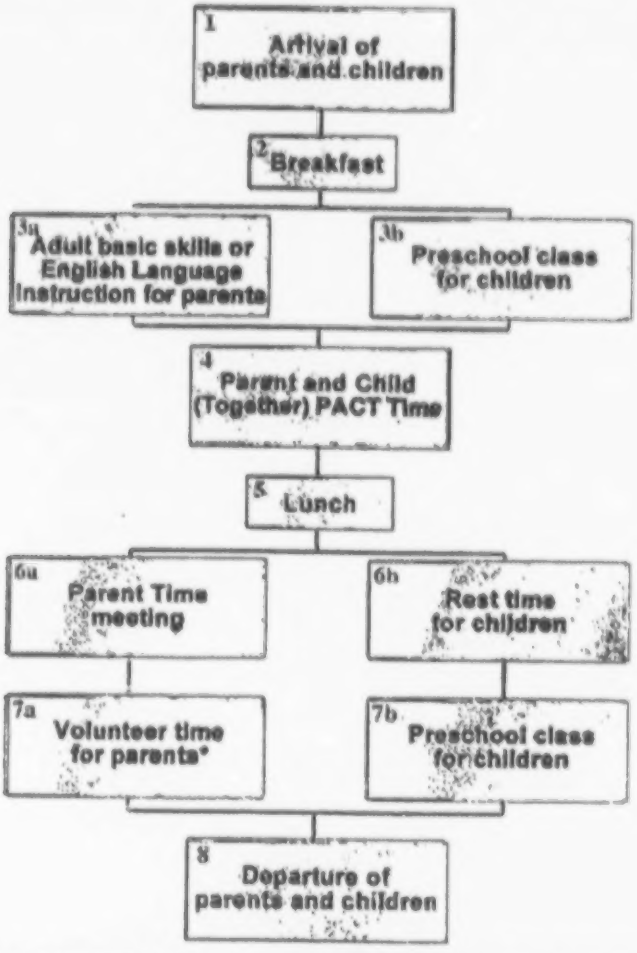
Action: Community providers should build on successful models for local collaboration.

More collaboration seems to be occurring at the local level, such as between the Upper Hutt ARLA and the Orongomai PTE, a marae-based provider. An excellent example of local collaboration is the Canterbury Adult Basic Education Network. It includes practitioners, researchers, tutors and others with a wide range of interests and involvement in literacy. Expertise includes vocational literacy, family literacy, the literacy needs of those with mental health problems, the use of computer technology for teaching literacy, the effects of illness/abuse on literacy learning in childhood, etc. The Network, which meets once a montn, has produced a directory of local providers and is developing a provider database. It is also conducting research, including a longitudinal study of adults who participated in adult literacy classes, finding out what prevented them from acquiring the skills they needed in school and triggered their desire to start learning again.

Action: Family literacy offers great promise and should become a core strand of New Zealand's adult literacy system.

An important element of any comprehensive literacy system is family literacy – a relatively new strand of literacy that has been growing rapidly in both the United Kingdom and United States. It has been especially effective on Native American reservations and it is possible that it would be equally welcomed among Maori who espouse holistic learning and place great prominence on family and extended family relationships.

Family literacy breaks the inter-generational cycle of low literacy by allowing parents and children to improve their skills together. It includes four core components: adult education, early childhood education, Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time, and Parent Time. This design is based on the premise that the components build on each other and are more effective when integrated than if they are provided separately. A typical family literacy programme is structured as follows:



* With current federal and state mandates for welfare reform, volunteer time in many programs counts as work experience. Some even use this time for parents to gain experience through job shadowing or internships.

Source: National Center for Family Literacy

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An important component of family literacy that separates it from other literacy programmes is Parent and Child Together (PACT) time, which allows families to come together to play, and through which parents can learn how to be their child's first and most important teacher. Parents often realise for the first time the great impact their teaching can have on their children. A second important element of family literacy programmes is the Parent Time, which enables parents to discuss topics that affect their lives, such as self-esteem, nutrition or child discipline. It allows them to develop a supportive network of other parents, which can be especially useful for solo parents. Another innovative feature of family literacy is volunteer time for parents. Volunteering in school and giving back to one's community increases parents' ownership in the programme and sets the stage for further involvement in their children's education. This also sometimes allows parents to develop their own work skills.

Research show that the education level of a parent (or primary caregiver) has an impact on the educational achievement of their children. For instance, the U.S. National Centre for Educational Statistics found that high school students whose parents did not complete high school were more than twice as likely to drop out as students whose parents had at least some college education. Investing in parents' skills also helps their children succeed. (National Coalition for Literacy, 2000).

International research finds that adults in family literacy programmes stay enrolled longer than in most adult-only programmes and their attendance rate is higher, leading to better learning gains, although one study found that learning gains tended to level off after about 50 hours of instruction. Adults also significantly improved their self-confidence, confidence in their parenting abilities and in their employment status. Children participating in family literacy programmes in 15 cities made gains at least three times greater than would have been expected based on their pre-enrolment rate of development. Children also showed an 80 percent increase in reading books and made twice as many trips to the library. (National Institute for Literacy, 2000b). In the United Kingdom, a family literacy model was established by the Basic Skills Agency in 1994. It targets families where parents have basic skills needs and the children are aged three to six. Evaluations have found the model effective, particularly for families where English is not the first language. One study found that linguistic minority parents scored an average of 10 percent higher on one assessment after participating in a family literacy programmes. Children also made substantial gains – a seven-month reading gain in three months and a 14-month gain in reading age in only three months. (Basic Skills Agency, 2000). An in-depth evaluation, Family Literacy Works, is available online at: http://www.basic-skills.co.uk/resear.html.

By coming together as a group, parents provide support to each other during their development as learners, parents and workers. Family literacy is built on the premise that education is a family value passed from one generation to the next and is designed to help parents increase their own value for education in the hopes that they will pass this on to their children.

In the U.S., many family literacy programmes are privately funded. The Toyota Corporation has given millions of dollars to the effort. The government also supports family literacy through the federal Even Start programme, which was created in 1988. Programmes are funded for four years at a time. Funding has grown from $14 million in 1989 to $150 million in 2000, with the U.S. House of Representatives approving funding of $250 million for 2001. (National Institute for Literacy, 2000c). An evaluation by the U.S. Department of Education found that Even Start cost about $2,500 per family annually. Most participating parents were high school dropouts (early school leavers) and earning below the poverty level. On average, they participated in the programme for 7 months and received an average of 13.5 hours of adult education, 6.5 hours of parenting education and 26 hours of early childhood education each month. Many programmes provide support services that remove barriers that could prevent some families from enrolling or

remaining in a family literacy programme. These include transportation vouchers, childcare for infants, nutrition services and family advocacy assistance. (U.S. Department of Education, 1995).

New Zealand is world-renowned for its innovations in children's reading, but has yet to develop a family literacy system. New Zealand's primary schools regularly provide Reading Recovery to the lowest performing six-year-olds and research shows that an overwhelming majority (usually over 90 percent) are soon reading at levels comparable to their classmates. It has been so successful, in fact, that it is now used widely around the world. The groundwork for family literacy was laid in 1999 when the government established a literacy taskforce that focused on the needs of children, recognising one of the fundamental principles of family literacy: that children's literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents. A useful topic for research would be potential ways to connect family literacy with Reading Recovery.

In order to move forward in family literacy, one option would be for the government to fund pilot projects in this area. Both Poirua's He Huarahi Tamariki School for Teenage Parents and Newtown's MCLaSS would be excellent places to trial family literacy, since both already include adult education for parents and daycare for children. Based on successes with family literacy with the Native American population in the Unites States and in the ESOL community in the United Kingdom, it is likely that family literacy could prove especially effective in both the Maori and ESOL communities.

Action: The government should expand efforts to close the "digital divide."

Technology increases the need for literacy and many literacy advocates consider the ability to use the Internet to be a core component of adult literacy. While some programmes in New Zealand provide instruction around using computers and the Internet, many do not. Technology can also be a useful tool to teach literacy skills, but this potential does not yet appear to be widely tapped by programmes. One next step would be for the government to assist literacy programmes in acquiring current technology.

Technology has potential to be a great equaliser in society. It offers opportunities for people from which society expects little (such as early school leavers) to acquire skills leading to lucrative jobs. For example, some low-income high school dropouts with low literacy skills in the U.S. are, through a Job Corps pilot project, receiving not just literacy skills and traditional vocational training but also computer skills training. Those that complete it successfully are likely to be the first in their families to earn competitive salaries and achieve long-term job security that will enable them to enter the middle class.

There is much New Zealand, the U.S. and the rest of the work can learn in this area from the United Kingdom, which has recently established a new network of ICT (Information Communication Technology) Learning Centres focused on disadvantaged communities. These new centres are bridging the "digital divide" by improving access to ICT and developing people's ICT skills. According to the Basic Skills Agency, some 90 percent of jobs in the United Kingdom involve some contact with Information Technology, but not everyone has access to instruction. A 1999 report by the U.S. Department of Commerce had similar findings.

Obstacle 2: QUALITY ASSURANCE/ACCOUNTABILITY

Little is known about how long participants stay in adult literacy programmes, how much they learn, whether or not they go on to further education or training and – most importantly – whether or not they are better able to cope with the print they encounter in daily life after participating in adult literacy programmes. Better accountability is needed at two levels: government agencies and literacy programmes.

Action: One government agency (or division of an agency) should have literacy as its focus and priority and be clearly held accountable for adult literacy outcomes.

Literacy is not a single agency issue, nor should it be. But with several agencies having jurisdiction over literacy-related issues – including the Ministry of Education, Skill New Zealand and the Department of Labour – there is no clear accountability for adult literacy outcomes. Each agency has its own priorities and adult literacy is not at the top of any of them.

While any single stakeholder, in or out of government cannot adequately meet the adult literacy challenge, one agency or division should have literacy as its focus and priority. This could include work not just on literacy itself, but ongoing efforts to help policymakers across government understand the connection between adult literacy and other important policy issues, such as those related to employment and a number of social issues. There could be some real benefits to charging one organisation with facilitating collaboration, co-operation and mutual planning.

One option would be to create an agency (or even a division of an agency) focused solely on literacy to serve as a focal point for the issue, and to bring together other agencies more regularly on "neutral" ground. Such an organisation could assist government agencies with both literacy policy development and providers with implementation. Several models for such as organisation exist, including the National Institute for Literacy in the United States, the Basic Skills Agency in the United Kingdom and the Literacy Secretariat in Canada. In all three cases, success is due in part to having both a degree of autonomy from government while still maintaining influence at the government level. These agencies have all gained a wide measure of support and sense of ownership from a wide range of constituencies.

Action: The literacy sector should give the government a consistent message on adult literacy.

Government officials point to inconsistent and even contradictory messages from the sector as an obstacle that has contributed to the lack of an adult literacy strategy to date. While the government has established various working groups over the years, the field remains dissatisfied about its opportunity to provide substantive input. Working groups established by the government have generally been by invitation only and there is concern that they are asked to simply "rubber-stamp" government proposals rather than help craft them.

The U.S. literacy field faced a similar situation in the early 1990s. A publication dated 1992 described that situation:

> The federal role is, for a number of reasons, not particularly clear-sighted or effective. To begin with, efforts to improve literacy fall under the purview of at least three federal agencies…adult literacy has not received high funding priority during the last decade…Leadership at the federal level has also not signalled this issue as a high priority…State officials seem to agree on the need to co-ordinate better the activities of various…agencies and departments that serve the

> populations most in need of literacy training…They agree, too, that one substantive change should be to encourage more overlap between vocational and basic skills training. (OECD, 1992: 32).

Ultimately, the literacy sector had to take the lead in helping the government better co-ordinate it's literacy efforts. In a sense, the field led by example, coming together to co-ordinate its own work and message through an organisation representing all literacy providers, the National Coalition for Literacy. The Coalition decided to make public policy its top priority and began actively reaching out to Congress with a common message, raising awareness about adult literacy, pushing for adult literacy legislation and advocating for increased adult literacy funding. Leaders in the literacy field conceptualised the National Literacy Act and approached members of Congress about it until a handful responded and agreed to introduce it. It took several years to enact it but in 1991 the National Literacy Act created the National Institute for Literacy, which is now the hub of the literacy movement in the U.S.

With the Institute's help and ongoing efforts to raise the visibility of the literacy issue within the government, the Coalition played a critical role in persuading the government to increase adult literacy funding, and it has increased by over 500 percent since passage of the National Literacy Act. Further increases are slated for next year. (More information about the Coalition is online at http://www.nifl.gov/Coalition/nclhome.htm). Australia and the United Kingdom offer similar models. Workbase recently initiated the development of a Coalition for Literacy to offer the field a chance to build on its common ground and share expertise and advice with the government in crafting literacy policies.

Workbase has a proven track record in serving the leadership role around vocational literacy, and – if the other sectors supported it – its duties (and funding) could potentially be expanded to include family and community literacy advocacy, information and policy advice. Another option would be for the government to provide some funding for the new Coalition for Literacy and ask it to play the convenor and advisory role. In theory, the downside could be that other agencies would pay less attention to literacy, thinking it's another agency's job. In practice, this has not been the case in the United States, where the National Institute for Literacy has been able to help spread its understanding of and vision for adult literacy, working within and among other government agencies on a number of initiatives. It has been able to bring the literacy issue to the table many times when it likely would not have come up otherwise.

Action: Literacy programmes should collect consistent data on outcomes.

Adult literacy programmes operate in an environment where there are no clear national outcomes against which their performance can be assessed. While some information is available about the number of people who participate in literacy programmes, very little information is available about the impact of programmes on learners. Are they actually improving their skills? If so, how is this affecting their lives? (i.e. Are they better able to provide for themselves and their families by getting a job or promotion? Are they reading more to their children? Are their children doing better in school? What else is different in their lives after improving their skills?) Before informed policy and funding decisions around adult literacy can be made, a key question needs to be answered: "What is the impact of adult literacy programmes to date?"

A system is needed to both monitor and evaluate student achievement so that refinements in programmes and policy are based on reliable information on what is working and what is not. To date, this has been somewhat of a chicken and egg issue: many providers are so financially strapped that they need additional funding to implement systems for monitoring outcomes, but on the other hand, the government needs demonstrated outcomes in order to justify increasing providers' funding levels.

The programme that seems to have done the best job tracking outcomes is Training Opportunities, which measures the number of adults who get jobs or go on to further training. There are three problems with this model, however, that need to be addressed. First, some programmes "cream," only accepting students who are likely to succeed while turning away those who have greater needs and will likely require more and longer-term assistance. Second, the follow up is very short-term – two months. Longer-term tracking, such as six months up to several years, should be a regular part of evaluations. Third, outcomes for literacy-focused programmes should go beyond simply employment and further training. Many adults make significant gains that are not captured by these two criteria. A wider and more appropriate range of outcomes could help reduce creaming.

Action: Create national standards/indicators of programme quality for literacy programmes.

Due to the uneven levels of quality, some sort of accreditation for literacy programmes could also be useful. As appropriate, this could be tied to the number of learners who achieve qualifications, as long as controls to prevent creaming are explicit and enforced. Other potential indicators of programme quality could include those elements identified by international research (see *Chapter 4* for details) as contributing to effectiveness, such as the following:

- On-going and appropriate monitoring and evaluation.
- Adequate learning time.
- Adult learner-centred curriculum and materials.
- Well-qualified teachers and tutors who have ongoing opportunities for professional development.
- Connections to networks that allow opportunities for sharing "best practices."
- A supportive atmosphere for students in class and at home and/or work.
- Well-designed groups that allow for group interaction in a class.
- "Counselling" that allows students to redefine objectives and recognise their learning progress.
- Availability of support services such as transportation and childcare.

Workbase has taken the lead in the development of national literacy standards/indicators of programme quality for vocational literacy providers by working with providers to develop a "quality standard" to aid the purchase of quality literacy, language and numeracy training. Workbase has also suggested incorporating a reporting mechanism into programmes subsidised by the government. (Workbase, 1999a). An important step towards creating such workplace-related standards would be for each ITO to establish a minimum set of literacy skills needed by workers in order to cope with demands of their respective industries. This will not be easy:

> It is critical to have a clear conceptual framework about what literacy is and what literacy training in the workplace is trying to achieve... The challenge for workplace literacy providers…will be to develop curricula which places literacy in the wider context of social interaction rather than simply as a prescribed set of generic decoding skills required for functional competence. (Moore, 1996: 190).

Workbase and several Industry Training Organisations are collaborating on a promising project, *Literacy in Industry*, which will provide some of this information. For more information on this project, see *Chapter 4*.

Obstacle 3: **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Like the U.S., New Zealand does not have a cadre of experienced, full-time teachers. While the precise number of instructors that are full-time, part-time, and volunteer are not available (and would make a good topic for data collection and further research), few full-time jobs are available for adult literacy professionals. This, in addition to low pay, low status and short-term and unpredictable funding streams, means educators have little incentive to enter the adult literacy field. (Skill New Zealand, 2000a).

Action: **New Zealand needs a cadre of well-trained literacy instructors who have access to ongoing professional development opportunities.**

Professional development for training providers needs to be a key aspect of any emerging policy on adult education and literacy. Ongoing professional development opportunities – such as seminars, workshops and conferences – would allow practitioners to collaborate, share resources, network, present models of good practice and discuss theoretical and practical issues. Unfortunately, there are few such opportunities for literacy practitioners in New Zealand. This, in turn, can affect the quality of programmes. According to one literacy expert, "Overall, the level of expertise in the field is quite low." (Moore, 2000c). Some adult literacy students agree. In the words of one: "Some of the tutors aren't up to scratch. Why don't the tutors get more training?"

Workbase's *Blueprint for Literacy* states, "There are few professional development opportunities and no specialist tertiary qualifications for adult literacy practitioners. This has a negative impact on the quality and outcomes of programmes...demand for literacy programmes needs to be matched by a supply of capable training providers able to deliver quality solutions." (Workbase, 2000).

Because there are so few jobs in adult literacy, most community-based literacy programmes rely heavily on volunteers. While there is an important role for volunteers in adult literacy, particularly working with adults in one-on-one settings, under current circumstances some are being asked to do too much by not just supplementing but supplanting the role of teachers. This means there is a wide variety in the quality of literacy tutoring provided by volunteers and that great amounts of funding and time must be used to constantly train new volunteers. According to Literacy Aotearoa, "Retention of personnel, both volunteer and paid or part-time is difficult when they are offered employment elsewhere. Economics dictate that people take on employment where and when they can." (Literacy Aotearoa, 1999: 8).

One literacy programme co-ordinator who avoids using volunteers explains,

> If you're asking people to work as volunteers for no pay, there are only certain people who are able to do that...We're going to provide a service, but the message is that it's not important.

Action: **More Maori tutors are needed.**

There are few Maori tutors relative to the need in the Maori community. There is general consensus among Maori interviewed for this report that many Maori learners prefer to learn from Maori tutors. In fact, one Maori tutor who interviews new students for her literacy programme found that of students who are told they will have a non-Maori tutor, about 60 percent do not return. There is also concern that adult literacy programmes are not training tutors in a way that encourages Maori to become tutors. An exception to this is Literacy Aotearoa which, in addition to its standard training model of training several nights a week for several hours, it offers tutor training over a weekend on a marae using the "Maori way of learning."

Obstacle 4: **FUNDING**

Historically, adult literacy has received neither sufficient attention nor funding from the government. Adult literacy receives less than one percent of the education budget annually for a total of $4.6 million in 1999 (excluding about $3 million in Training Opportunities funding that is designated for literacy). Prior to 1996, adult literacy received about 25 percent less funding annually.[17]

According to *Vote: Education 2000*, adult literacy funding is slated for a $2 million increase annually over the next four years beginning in 2000/01. It is not clear how this money will be spent. Adult literacy programmes are much more reliant on central government funding than their U.S. counterparts. Individual donations do not seem to be part of the funding stream, nor is there a counterpart to state government funding. Private philanthropic organisations are also rare in New Zealand.

Action: The government should substantially increase literacy funding.

Low funding levels have contributed to tension between different sectors of the field, which generally seems to operate under an "either/or" paradigm in which an increase in one sector is considered to be at the expense of another. This has led to "a fair share of internal conflicts (both within and between agencies)...the degree of conflict...appears to have increased almost in proportion to the degree that the field has suffered cut-backs." (Benseman, 1999: 14).

Inadequate government funding for adult literacy has exacerbated the tension between the community-based sector and the workplace-based sector. As workplace-based programmes have emerged in recent years, some community-based programmes have felt threatened. With over one million adults needing literacy services, both community-based and workplace programmes are essential. While their motives and philosophies may vary, both have unique strengths and are necessary components of an integrated, comprehensive adult literacy system.

Action: New funding should include new funding streams.

In addition to being increased, funding should be restructured in a way that does not force organisations that need to be working together to compete against each other. Any outcome data that programmes collect on their effectiveness can only enhance their argument for more funding. One way to achieve this would be set up several funding streams for adult literacy that are linked to proven effectiveness of providers. For example, there could be one funding stream for community-based organisations with perhaps a special stream for ESOL, another for workplace literacy, another for family literacy and another Maori-focused programmes, etc. Workbase has developed a proposal for a new fund to be established to support literacy, language and numeracy training in the workplace. This proposal was picked up by the Labour Party during the last campaign and included as a campaign promise, but has not yet been implemented.

A related problem is that, apart from Training Opportunities, government funding for literacy is not open to new or alternative literacy providers, but is generally restricted to existing providers. Lack of funding may discourage potential new providers of literacy from moving forward in this area. With one in five adults demonstrating literacy needs, new providers should be actively encouraged.

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[17] Section 321 of the 1990 Education Act provides about $12 million of the tertiary education budget annually for "other tertiary services." The $12 million is allocated among 14 providers: Literacy Aotearoa, MCLaSS, National Association of ESOL Home Tutor Programmes, Workbase Education, Te Kohanga Reo Trust, NZ Playcentre Federation, NZ School of Dance, NZ Drama School, NZ Childcare Association, Taratahi Agricultural, Nelson School of Music, PIERC and the Institute of Professional Legal Studies.

Part of the reason adult literacy is not adequately funded is that it seems to have few allies in Parliament. While both Workbase and Literacy Aotearoa are making an effort to cultivate relationships with government officials, there seems to be virtually no organised advocacy efforts and the agencies that are advocating for literacy are not co-ordinating their message. Government officials point to this – and the occasional contradictory messages they receive from different sectors of the field – as one of the reasons why an adult literacy strategy has been so long in coming. The new National Coalition for Literacy could assist with addressing this challenge. The Industry Training Federation and Association of Polytechnics of New Zealand have also brought together the literacy field around issues of mutual interest.

Action: The government should provide funding specifically for adult literacy research.

Funding explicitly for adult literacy research is lacking and is much-needed. The lack of funding for adult literacy research is unlikely to become available until an adult literacy strategy is established:

> Explicit social policy has become much more important in the struggle to win government funding over recent years. Previously, government funding was usually allocated on a 'worthy case' basis or as a result of effective lobbying from interest groups, independently of official policy. For example, research funding from the Ministry of Education used to be allocated to studies that were seem as being of good quality and of educational merit. Now, all research funding is allocated on the basis of whether or not it informs the government on its education directions spelt out in key policy documents such as 'Education for the 21st Century.' In other words, if your educational work does not relate to official government policy, its chances of securing ongoing funding are practically zilch. (Benseman and Sutton, no date: 7).

Again, this is a chicken and egg scenario. In-depth research on literacy gains would likely reinforce the need for a substantial increase in the government's investment in literacy, but this research is not likely to occur until after the government substantially increases this investment.

Action: Waiting lists are prevalent and should be eliminated by increasing the field's capacity to serve adults who want to improve their skills.

Low funding prevents the sector from meeting the demand for its services. With 200,000 adults with pressing literacy needs and only about 17,000 participating in literacy courses annually, adult literacy education is not well-resourced. Evidence of the demand for literacy services outweighing the supply is the emergence of waiting lists from adults who want to participate in adult literacy programmes. For example, MCLaSS has a waiting list that is nearly as long as its enrolment, as do some Literacy Aotearoa and Training Opportunities programmes. Workbase has also experienced an increasing demand for its services and has increased its number of projects by 50 percent over last year.

Adult literacy students are well-aware of this need, commenting:

- "Christchurch needs more places like this. We need more programmes like this in hard to reach places. There are a lot of people in remote areas that could do with a lot of help."
- "I think there's not enough classes like this. I know quite a few people like me who have trouble reading and they can't get a job because they don't have the qualifications so they're on unemployment."
- "If you took this [programme] away, there's not anything else really."

Obstacle 5: **MARGINALISATION OF LITERACY IN MAJOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY INITIATIVES**

Much adult literacy instruction occurs incidentally as a by-product of achieving other objectives, for example within the Training Opportunities and Youth Training programmes. A long-term approach needs to recognise that literacy can be part of other policy initiatives. A good example of this occuring as it should is the National Certificate in Educational Achievement (NCEA). Unfortunately, there are also examples of it not occurring, such as the Closing the Gaps strategy to date. With Maori demonstrating significant literacy needs and research suggesting that Maori actually benefit more from literacy than non-Maori, it is important for policymakers not to overlook ways investing in literacy can be part of the solution to other policy problems.

Other policy frameworks and initiatives that should explicitly incorporate adult literacy are:

- Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC)
- Modern Apprenticeship Programme
- Children's literacy initiative
- Industry Training Strategy
- National Qualifications Framework

Because the Industry Training Strategy and National Qualifications Framework offer much promise in this area and are fundamental parts of New Zealand's education and training infrastructure, specific suggestions for better integrating literacy into them are outlined below.

INTEGRATING LITERACY INTO THE INDUSTRY TRAINING STRATEGY

While the Industry Training Act does not refer to literacy, many ITOs report that low levels of literacy prevent some employees from completing industry qualifications. ITOs have a variety of responses to literacy and about half subsidise some literacy training (even if it is very little), according to Industry Training Federation estimates. Some ITOs see literacy as an issue for government alone to address, not an area in which employers or industries should play a role.

A recent Workbase survey of 49 ITOs found that 55 percent recognised that literacy, language and numeracy were "an issue to some degree" in their industry. Three ITOs identified literacy, language and numeracy as "major issues." Forty-two percent, however, said literacy is not part of the ITO's role. Fourteen of the 52 require literacy unit standards in their qualifications, and 19 have qualifications that are flexible enough that they can include literacy. Sixteen percent have purchased literacy, language and numeracy training.

The Industry Training Strategy is currently under review by the government and it is likely that revisions will be made to better integrate literacy. During the initial phase (1992 to present) of the Industry Training Strategy, the focus was on developing programmes to meet the needs of industry, signing up trainees and securing employer 'buy-in.' As of the next phase, it is timely to consider a new set of issues.

The Industry Training Federation considers key questions to include the following:

- Of the 1.6 million workers in New Zealand, about one-quarter (56,000) participate in industry training. Should new funding be used to expand and engage in new industries, thus investing in a larger number of workers, or would it be smarter to invest in an infrastructure that can assist all workers?

- Who are the ITOs primary clients – workers or industry? What should ITOs fund? Is the goal of the ITS to upskill workers who already have strong skills or is it more of a "second chance" programme? Can and should it try to do both?
- How should ITOs fund training?
- Is government beginning to pay for training that would happen anyway, or are there ways ITS funds could leverage training that would not otherwise occur?
- How does the funding mechanism influence what training takes place?
- Should government increase funding to meet the total demand or prioritise funding by steering it towards certain industries or certain skill sectors? (Williams and Eadie, 1999).

The government has a similar agenda for the review and is considering issues that include the following:

- Should the Industry Training Act explicitly add literacy and numeracy training as responsibilities of ITOs?
- Should changes be made to performance criteria and purchasing frameworks for ITOs?
- What barriers prevent ITOs from purchasing literacy and how can they be addressed?
- How can the government encourage new and better providers to want to enter the market for literacy? (Skill New Zealand, 2000b).

Opportunities to improve the Industry Training Strategy in regards to literacy are as follows:

Action: Make literacy an explicit part of the Industry Training Strategy.

With the review of the Industry Training Strategy now underway, government has an opportunity to send a message to industry about literacy's importance and could ensure that no ITOs ignore this issue. Since both society and business benefit from any investment in adult literacy, both government and industry should invest in it. One option for moving things forward would be for the government to explicitly include literacy and numeracy skills among ITO responsibilities – and to include additional new funding to assist ITOs in this area.

Action: Create a new funding stream to assist employers in investing in literacy.

ITOs report that current funding mechanisms discourage them from investing in literacy because on average, literacy costs more than other credits. It is both expensive and time-consuming relative to other training. This is because literacy education is intensive. It requires more time for gains to be achieved (generally thought to be 100 hours to advance one "reading year"). One-to-one tutoring often gets the quickest results but is more expensive than classes. Employers therefore, pay a greater share of the costs for literacy than they do for other training and the benefits are less industry-specific. In some cases, such as *Case Study #4*, a large business with over 1,000 employees, the cost has not prevented the development of literacy training. In other cases, especially smaller businesses that are more common in New Zealand, the cost issue looms larger. For example, the National Operations Manager for *Case Study #3* had to aggressively seek funding to subsidise his company's programme. Had the ITO and Skill New Zealand not each agreed to cover one-third of the cost, the literacy training is unlikely to have been implemented.

The bottom line is that literacy training is not likely to occur unless the government offers funding specifically for this purpose.

> Explicit government investment in literacy skills for employees and job seekers…recognises that there are inadequate incentives for learners or employers to improve literacy without direct government funding. (Skill New Zealand, 2000a: 2).

In one sense, the government is already paying a price for not explicitly investing enough in workforce literacy – through the costs of unemployment, social exclusion and welfare payments. The New Zealand Council for Trade Unions advocates that training points to a role for ITOs in literacy, stating that "ITOs should be required to set up tripartite programmes to promote literacy in the workplace in terms of improving productivity, health and safety, workplace relations and morale." (Moore, 1996: 183). A fund dedicated specifically for literacy training could reduce these costs in the long-term. The government could provide the new funding to ITOs who could in turn, allocate it to specific employers. Such a fund would likely result in a significant increase in literacy training in the workplace.

Action: Provide employers with a more clearly defined route to access basic skills training for employees.

Once an industry recognises it needs to address literacy skills, the way forward is not clear, largely because the literacy infrastructure is so poorly developed. Many ITOs do not know where to go for assistance in analysing the literacy needs of particular industries or companies. Companies belonging to an ITO that does not fund literacy don't know where else to seek the funding they need to develop a literacy programme. A number of companies in the Auckland area (and a few in other regions) have contracted with Workbase to identify the scope of literacy needs through a "literacy needs analysis" of the company, and to address them through literacy courses. Another organisation, Workbase Educational Trust, provides companies in the Wellington area with literacy training. All of the service provision of both organisations is funded by industry.

Action: Research outcomes of literacy programmes and disseminate findings to employers.

No data is available about which types of companies have implemented literacy programmes at work, how the programmes are organised, what the curriculum looks like or what the effects of this training have been. While Skill New Zealand has analysed the return on investment for individual employers, there is not any information on the impact for the sector as a whole. Little is known about how individual companies define literacy. Documentation and dissemination of practice has been limited. (Moore, 1996). Information on the impact of industry training on business performance would be useful and any information on the impact of literacy training could help make the case to more employers that literacy is a worthwhile investment. According to the Executive Director of the Industry Training Federation, Paul Williams, it would be helpful if government could show industry how literacy adds value and that it shows a return on the investment (i.e. $5,000 investment per employee found x return on investment). According to one ITO, companies might invest in literacy if they saw a benefit to them. For instance, they might be willing to contract out for English language training for an immigrant with technical skills if this would allow the company to benefit from those technical skills. (Brady, 2000).

In addition to inadequate subsidy levels, ITOs report limited choice and skills of literacy suppliers, inappropriate unit standards and a lack of assessment and learning resources. While investing in literacy can be expected to increase productivity, as shown by the international research discussed in *Chapter 4*, employers have other choices for increasing productivity, such as better use of technology, better "screening" of new employees and restructuring existing staff. (Skill New Zealand, 2000a).

INTEGRATING LITERACY INTO THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

There are a number of issues around the NQF and adult literacy, and the NZQA has expressed interest in addressing them. According to Michel Norrish, who is responsible for "generic skills" at

NZQA: "NZQA can be part of the solution we believe...The door is open to innovative and new ideas to make it more friendly and relevant to generic skills." (Norrish, 2000).

Action: The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) should be revised to explicitly address literacy.

Unit standards in their current form do not reflect the range of literacy skills necessary for functioning in daily life. While the NQF's Level 1 contains a series of unit standards around "communication," covering first and second language speakers of English, the level of competence required by these standards is highly variable. In some cases, such as some "introductory interpersonal communications," unit standards are appropriate for literacy, but in most cases they are not. Many adults with very low skills may not be able to even access the NQF at all. Research is needed about the degree to which new industry qualifications are accessible to those adults with literacy needs.

This has serious ramifications for adult literacy programmes because in many, the curriculum is closely tied to unit standards and funding is dependent upon ongoing student acquisition of unit standards. According to Workbase, "These unit standards...often limit what is offered in learning programmes, especially where funding is tied to unit standards-based programmes." (Workbase, 1999a: 6). Many government and industry funders require literacy programmes to ensure that students acquire a certain number of unit standards per week. This can be problematic for programmes working with adults at the lowest skill level and could pose a threat to future funding for programmes serving adults at the lowest skill levels.

One option for addressing this need would be to develop a set of national unit standards and a uniform reporting mechanism mapped to the NQF. Certainly this would be welcome by some learners. For example, one student interviewed said his children looked up to him more once he "had a piece of paper in a frame." According to literacy tutor Jane Mountier, "[My students] were so proud when they got their unit standard. It was the first time they'd achieved something like that...their first success in the education system."

The challenge in creating literacy unit standards is how to capture what adult literacy students have learned without stigmatising it. It can be demeaning for some adults to prove that they have "literacy" skills and the stigma associated with literacy could also prevent adults from seeking these unit standards in the first place. If literacy unit standards are created, it would be useful to find a less threatening name for them.

One option proposed by Workbase, would be to divide Level 1 of the Qualifications Framework into two bands, entry level and exit level, in order to further distinguish between different levels of learning. Literacy standards linked to the NQF could potentially be used for assessment upon entry and exit from learning programmes. Another option that is being explored by the NQF would be to find a way to recognise the literacy skills that are already embedded in other unit standards across the NQF.

Action: The credit value for literacy-related credits should be revised.

When literacy-related "communications" unit standards were first created, their credit value reflected the time it takes to acquire these skills. While most unit standards were worth 3-4 credits, those related to literacy were initially worth 30-40 credits. They were later reduced to 3-4 credits. Since funding is linked to credits, the end result is that the funding available for literacy-related unit standards is entirely insufficient for the time it takes to achieve them. Skill New Zealand also measures ITOs against credit achievement. If faced with the choice of getting the same amount of funding to spend either 3 hours teaching an employee job-specific training or 30 hours teaching

literacy skills – only to achieve the same number of credits for either – the choice is clear (and it's not literacy).

INTEGRATING LITERACY INTO OTHER POLICY INITIATIVES

Other policy initiatives also directly affect literacy. A new report from the United States includes a new framework for the design and implementation of policies for improving literacy. It includes 10 specific policy targets, which call for the promotion of the following:

- A culture of life-long and life-wide (encompassing work, home and community) learning.
- Early childhood education and childcare programmes.
- Measures to improve the quality of education.
- Steps to reduce inequality in the outcomes of schooling.
- Access to adult education for all citizens.
- Workplace literacy programmes.
- Literacy-rich environments at work.
- Literacy-rich environments at home.
- Literacy-rich environments in the community.
- Access to information and communication technologies (Tuijnman, 2000).

Finally, integrating a comprehensive adult literacy strategy with other policy initiatives is not enough. In order to be effective such a strategy must recognise that government cannot do it by itself.

> Governments cannot do it all alone; they can formulate strategies for improvement, but delivering those strategies requires partnerships…The active use of literacy skills throughout life is essential. That cannot be legislated, but requires changes in behaviour by individuals and institutions. What is needed is the development of a culture committed to learning. Rather than the separate development of pre-school, primary, secondary and adult education policies, the research suggests a convergence of policy and practice towards comprehensive approaches to lifelong learning for all. The agenda for a new partnership to raise adult literacy levels would include: improving curricula; strengthening incentives to continue learning throughout the life-span; ensuring that measures to improve literacy are built into strategies for community development; building the capacity of employers to create and offer jobs that both call on and enhance literacy; and encouraging everyday practices which use literacy skills to the full. That last objective calls in particular for the commitment of employers, given their daily opportunity to promote literacy and learning in the workplace. (OECD, 1997: 3-4).

CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

There is much the United States' literacy field can learn from New Zealand's experience. Six observations are summarised below.

OBSERVATION 1: The need for workplace literacy has never been greater and a specialised workplace literacy "one-stop" can facilitate growth in this area.

New Zealand's reputation for being on "the cutting edge" of workplace literacy internationally seems well-deserved. There is much to be learned from New Zealand's workplace literacy model. Much of the growth in workplace literacy in New Zealand over the past decade is a result of the not-for-profit organisation, Workbase, which serves as a "one-stop" centre. Were Workbase not aggressively marketing the issue to both industry and government, it is unlikely that this movement would have developed. In addition to raising awareness about the literacy need and – in so doing – speaking the language of business to business, Workbase assists companies in tackling the literacy issue from start to finish. Workbase's services include conducting extensive literacy "needs analyses" of employees, designing a custom-made literacy programme for the company, delivering all training and conducting follow-up assessments. The U.S. does not yet have a similar organisation and Workbase could serve as a model for the development of one in the future.

Workbase recognises that literacy is but one component of organisational change and, as part of any contract to provide literacy training, Workbase also addresses the companies' organisational communication systems and processes that prevent some employees from participating effectively at work. This can include re-writing company forms in "plain language" in order to make it easier for employees to use them. In the case of most companies that contract with Workbase, improving workplace communication is the goal of the training, and literacy is seen as a means towards that end.

Probably the most important common denominator of effective workplace literacy programmes in New Zealand is that the companies see literacy is one piece of a larger improvement strategy. As the U.S. moves forward in the workplace literacy arena, it is vitally important to keep this in mind. Managers in all of the models that are deemed effective understood this. For example, the National Operations Manager for the South Auckland factory case study, explained,

> [Improvement] goes hand-in-hand with other factors like wages. You can't isolate factors – it's all together. This literacy is just one part of a change programme. It will not work unless …you're committed to a change programme. You have to meet them half way. Change is about quite a number of things. In isolation changes are meaningless. Together they're dynamic.

A Departmental Manager at Norske Skog, Mark Haslan, sums it the role of workplace literacy well, stating that while the impact can be "quite staggering," literacy training is "not a panacea."

> It's a component…one piece of the puzzle…along with leadership, a good business plan and capital. You can be building the other pieces of the puzzle and you can keep falling over this piece.

On the other hand, management of companies with less impressive programmes included in a series of site visits were implementing the literacy programmes in isolation. In fact, a site visit to one

workplace literacy programme that was implemented in isolation – without reviewing or changing any other processes – found few benefits to the company and very little enthusiasm from participants, one of whom described it "as a waste of time."

Another structure unique to New Zealand that could potentially be a model for the U.S. is Industry Training Organisations. These organisations, funded by industry and government, serve as "umbrella" organisations for each industry to facilitate training within that industry. They also play a key role industry-wide in determining what type of training is most needed and in assisting companies in providing outside assessments of the training needs of employees.

OBSERVATION 2: Expand and improve upon volunteer training.

New Zealand's literacy programmes have steadily increased their number of paid staff over recent years, usually with an associated move to small group instruction. (Benseman and Sutton, 1999). The calibre of tutoring in New Zealand among the programmes visited for this report is generally exceptional. Teachers and tutors are far better qualified. Experienced, full-time professionals teach most literacy students in the programmes visited for this report. Most of the tutors had a master's degree in adult education and literacy or another special certification. Most were also taking advantage of on-going professional development opportunities. While the perception in New Zealand is that not nearly enough professional development opportunities are available, they seem abundant compared to the U.S.

New Zealand also expects more training for its literacy volunteers. Adults who volunteer as one-on-one tutors are encouraged to take 100 hours of training. According to Peter Issacs, the co-director of Literacy Aotearoa, "We think this is the minimum to guarantee quality to the student." This is 10 times the standard 10 hours of training that most volunteers in the U.S. initially receive.

Training is extensive and thorough. Topics include: how adults learn; effective tutoring of reading, writing and numeracy; and socio-political issues such as the Treaty of Waitangi. Under this model, volunteers have 60 hours of training, followed by 20 hours of supervised practice (i.e. tutoring an adult with a more experienced tutor present). Next, they have another 20 hours of training, which allows them to discuss and reflect on any unexpected issues that arose.

Volunteers who take advantage of all 100 hours of training receive a volunteer tutor qualification that is recognised by the NZQA. While Literacy Aotearoa encourages of all if its affiliates to provide 100 hours of training to their tutors, some do not adhere to this policy and provide less. The national organisation envisions that at some point affiliates will have to comply with this policy in order to continue their association with Literacy Aotearoa.

In the U.S., volunteers are often relied on for both one-on-one and classroom teaching. Rather than expecting volunteers to function as professional teachers in a classroom, as many programmes do, a more appropriate role might be for volunteers to assist professional teachers – an approach used very effectively by some programmes in New Zealand. Under this model, adult literacy classes are taught by professional teachers who specialise in and have years of training and experience in teaching adults. Volunteers assist, such as working one-on-one with students who are having difficulty.

OBSERVATION 3: The U.S. should consider developing programmes similar to the Training Opportunities model.

Training Opportunities seems to be a very good model that could be adopted in the U.S., especially in light of welfare reform. U.S. literacy programmes that are working with adults seeking employment may want to consider incorporating some of the elements that contribute to Training

Opportunities' success: a substantial time commitment to learning (a minimum of 30 hours per week); integrating literacy classes with work experience; offering support services such as transportation subsidies; providing computer instruction; offering intervention and assistance in dealing with personal issues as they arise (including connections with other community service providers); and teaching "life skills" such as punctuality and teamwork. Some programmes also offer special segments on CV (resume) writing and mock job interviews.

It is interesting from a policy perspective that while the U.S. has in recent years taken steps that make it more difficult for welfare recipients to participate in education and training, New Zealand takes the opposite approach: requiring many people "on the dole" – especially young adults – to invest in their skills by enrolling in Training Opportunities or Youth Training. In some cases those who don't can lose their benefit.

While the outcomes of Training Opportunities are impressive – over 65 percent of trainees going on to a job or further training – there are two dangers to avoid. First, the duration of programmes is not always long enough. Students in 18-week programmes repeatedly commented that they needed to stay longer. On the other hand, there was some complacency among longer programmes, such as one in which students participate for one year at a time. A balance somewhere between the two could address this concern. Second, there is a very real danger of "creaming" – or selecting students who are most likely to succeed at the expense of students who need more help. Any movement towards this type of programme in the U.S. should build in strong protections against creaming.

OBSERVATION 4: The literacy field in New Zealand is fragmented to the extent of the U.S. field prior to the National Literacy Act, thus reinforcing the value of the National Literacy Act.

While there are outstanding literacy programmes in New Zealand, there is no overarching co-ordination, collaboration or central information resource – and this is urgently needed. Experiencing the environment without such an entity reinforced the value of the National Literacy Act and in particular, the National Institute for Literacy.

While New Zealand has one national organisation for community-based literacy and another for workplace-based literacy, they have somewhat differing views of literacy and how to best assist adults with literacy needs, and have yet to establish a track record of collaboration. This serves as an important reminder to the National Institute for Literacy how vitally important it is not to endanger its effectiveness by ever seeming to favour one strand of literacy (workplace, family or community) over the other two. What is missing in New Zealand is neutral ground where both strands of the field feel ownership, and where they can strategise about the greater good of their cause. Until such an entity exists, it will be virtually impossible for the field to speak with one unified voice to government – a proven necessity in the U.S. for getting literacy legislation established and funding increased.

Experiencing an environment without a National Coalition for Literacy also reinforced its value. In terms of advocacy efforts, New Zealand's literacy field seems to be about where the U.S. was prior to passage of the National Literacy Act. New Zealand is making progress in this area but again, seeing a climate in which an organised effort in this area is in its infancy is a reminder of how far the U.S. has come in the past decade. Just as there is much the U.S. can learn from New Zealand, New Zealand is also learning from the United States, and New Zealand's literacy leaders are using the U.S. model of a National Coalition for Literacy to establish a similar structure in New Zealand. They are also holding a series of National Literacy Summits, which were inspired by the U.S. National Literacy Summit in early 2000. Both developments hold great promise.

OBSERVATION 5: Continue developing the United States' newest strand of literacy: family literacy.

Once again, experiencing an environment in which family literacy does not yet exist serves as a reminder of its importance and value.

Two of the more impressive literacy programmes visited in New Zealand, MCLaSS and He Huarahi Tamariki School for Teenage Parents offer parents ESOL and literacy and related education respectively. Both also offer daycare services for children. It is impossible to visit either programme without recognising the potential for family literacy. In both cases, all that is needed is to incorporate early childhood education and parenting education/activities. While both programmes are already impressive, it seems likely that both parents and children would gain more if the programmes were adapted in this way.

Also contributing to the conclusion that that the U.S. should continue its efforts in this area is the overwhelming number of adult literacy students who mentioned helping their children as a reason why they had enrolled in a literacy programme. Among students interviewed for both the case studies and at several other site visits, helping their children was one of the most frequent reasons given for adults wanting to improve their own skills. Some of these students are taking it upon themselves to try to become their children's first and most important teacher by activities such as gathering together to do their homework in the evening. These students would likely embrace family literacy, but at the moment it is not an option for them.

New Zealand is moving towards family literacy, but is at the earliest stage of development. In 1999 the government established a literacy taskforce that focused on the needs of children, and established a goal for the literacy levels of 9 year-old children. The taskforce recognised one of the fundamental principles of family literacy: the intergenerational nature of literacy (i.e. the close relationship between the literacy level of parents and their children.) The Ministry of Education has expressed ongoing interest in this area, and New Zealand seems to be on the brink of moving forward in this area.

OBSERVATION 6: Literacy leaders in the U.S. need to reach out more to literacy experts in other countries.

Finally, this fellowship reinforced that while low literacy is a universal issue, there are various approaches to addressing it and that no country or organisation has all of the answers. Just as practitioners at the local level and national organisations benefit from collaboration, so too could literacy experts in the U.S. benefit by more dialogue with their international counterparts.

An opportunity for facilitating this would be an Internet discussion group/listserv to provide literacy leaders with an on-line forum to communicate and learn from one another regularly. The National Institute for Literacy is considering establishing such a listserv.

CONCLUSION

The adult literacy movements in New Zealand and the United States are both on the brink of a new phase of growth and development. The coming year will prove critical to both, and will likely set the stage for how much is accomplished in the coming decade.

Improvements in both countries hinge on ongoing initiatives that are bringing together policymakers and practitioners. In New Zealand, much of what the field will be able to accomplish over the coming decade will depend upon the adult literacy strategy being crafted by the Ministry

of Education – and whether or not it reflects the best thinking of leaders in other government agencies and from the adult literacy sector. In the U.S., much will be determined by the ongoing activities around the National Literacy Summit – and whether or not they reflect the best thinking of leaders in other government agencies and from the adult literacy sector.

If literacy leaders in both countries seize the opportunities at hand, our nations will benefit, as will individual citizens. By taking advantage of current opportunities to propel literacy forward, we can ensure that in the future fewer people will share the sentiment of an adult literacy student in Christchurch:

> I've gotten by…I've done okay, considering. And now I'm back here and improving my skills. But sometimes I can't help but wonder what my life could have been if I'd learned all of this 30 years ago. What could I have done? Who could I be?

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APPENDIX 1

TEXT OF THE NATIONAL LITERACY ACT: PUBLIC LAW 102-73

One Hundred Second Congress of the United States of America
AT THE FIRST SESSION
Begun and held at the City of Washington on Thursday, the third day of January,
one thousand nine hundred and ninety-one
An Act
To enhance the literacy and basic skills of adults, to ensure that all adults in the United States acquire the basic skills necessary to function effectively and achieve the greatest possible opportunity in their work and in their lives, and to strengthen and coordinate adult literacy programs.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the 'National Literacy Act of 1991'.
SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
The Congress finds that--
(1) nearly 30,000,000 adults in the United States have serious problems with literacy;
(2) literacy problems are intergenerational and closely associated with poverty and pose a major threat to the economic well-being of the United States;
(3) present public and private literacy programs reach only a small portion of the population in need and often result in only minimal learning gains;
(4) the prevention of illiteracy is essential to stem further growth in national illiteracy rates;
(5) literacy programs generally lack adequate funding, adequate coordination with other literacy programs, and an adequate investment in teacher training and technology;
(6) access to better information about the best practices in the literacy field and more research in order to provide better diagnostic and instructional tools are essential for the improvement of literacy and employability in the United States;
(7) as many as 50,000,000 workers may have to be trained or retrained before the year 2000;
(8) the supply of unskilled workers is increasing while the demand for unskilled labor is decreasing;
(9) programs under the Adult Education Act, which are the largest Federal source of direct literacy services in the United States, serve only 10 percent of eligible participants; and
(10) all public and private literacy programs serve only about 19 percent of those who need help.
SEC. 3. DEFINITION.
For purposes of this Act the term 'literacy' means an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential.

TITLE I--LITERACY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND COORDINATION
SEC. 101. LITERACY RELATED PROGRAMS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.
Section 202 of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3412) is amended by adding at the end the following:
'(h) The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education, in addition to performing such functions as the Secretary may prescribe, shall have responsibility for coordination of all literacy related programs and policy initiatives in the Department. The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education shall assist in coordinating the related activities and programs of other Federal departments and agencies.'.

SEC. 102. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY.
(a) PURPOSE- It is the purpose of the amendment made by this section to enhance the national effort to eliminate the problem of illiteracy by the year 2000 by improving research, development and information dissemination through a national research center.
(b) FINDINGS- The Congress finds that--
(1) much too little is known about how to improve access to, and enhance the effectiveness of, adult literacy programs, assessment tools, and evaluation efforts;
(2) there is neither a reliable nor a central source of information about the knowledge base in the area of literacy;
(3) a national institute for literacy would--
(A) provide a national focal point for research, technical assistance and research dissemination, policy analysis, and program evaluation in the area of literacy; and
(B) facilitate a pooling of ideas and expertise across fragmented programs and research efforts.
(c) AMENDMENT TO THE ADULT EDUCATION ACT- Section 384 of the Adult Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1213c) is amended--

(1) in the second sentence of subsection (a), by inserting after `shall include' the following: `the operation of the Institute established by subsection (c) and'; and
(2) by adding at the end the following:
`(c) ESTABLISHMENT- (1) There is established the National Institute for Literacy (in this section referred to as the `Institute'). The Institute shall be administered under the terms of an interagency agreement entered into by the Secretary with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the `Interagency Group'). The head of any other agency designated by the President may be involved in the operation of the Institute as fits the involvement of such agency in accomplishing the purposes of the Institute. The Secretary may include in the Institute any research and development center supported under section 405(d)(4)(A)(ii) of the General Education Provisions Act and any other center, institute, or clearinghouse established within the Department of Education whose purpose is determined by the Secretary to be related to the purpose of the Institute.
`(2) The Institute shall have offices separate from the offices of any agency or department involved in the operation of the Institute.
`(3) The Interagency Group shall consider the Board's recommendations in planning the goals of the Institute and in the implementation of any programs to achieve such goals. The daily operations of the Institute shall be carried out by the Director. If the Board's recommendations are not followed, the Interagency Group shall provide a written explanation to the Board concerning actions the Interagency Group has taken that includes the Interagency Group's reasons for not following the Board's recommendations with respect to such actions. The Board may also request a meeting with the Interagency Group to discuss the Board's recommendations.
`(d) DUTIES- (1) The Institute is authorized, in order to improve and expand the system for delivery of literacy services, to--
`(A) assist appropriate Federal agencies in setting specific objectives and strategies for meeting the goals of this title and in measuring the progress of such agencies in meeting such goals;
`(B) conduct basic and applied research and demonstrations on literacy, including--
`(i) how adults learn to read and write and acquire other skills;
`(ii) how the literacy skills of parents affect the ability of children to learn literacy skills;
`(iii) the assessment of literacy skills and the development of instructional techniques;
`(iv) the best methods for assisting adults and families to acquire literacy skills, including the use of technology;
`(v) the special literacy needs of individuals with learning disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency;
`(vi) how to effectively reach and teach the most educationally disadvantaged individuals;
`(vii) the use of technology and other studies which will increase the literacy knowledge base, use but not duplicate the work of other research services, and build on the efforts of such other research services; and
`(viii) how to attract, train, and retrain professional and volunteer teachers of literacy;
`(C) assist Federal, State, and local agencies in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy with respect to literacy by--
`(i) establishing a national data base with respect to--
`(I) literacy and basic skills programs, including programs in Federal departments, State agencies, and local agencies, and programs that are privately supported through nonprofit entities and for profit entities;
`(II) assessment tools and outcome measures;
`(III) the amount and quality of basic education provided in the workplace by businesses and industries; and
`(IV) progress made toward the national literacy goals; and
`(ii) providing technical and policy assistance to government entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy and the development of model systems for implementing and coordinating Federal literacy programs that can be replicated at the State and local level;
`(D) provide program assistance, training, and technical assistance for literacy programs throughout the United States in order to improve the effectiveness of such programs and to increase the number of such programs, which assistance and training shall--
`(i) be based on the best available research and knowledge; and
`(ii) be coordinated with activities conducted by--
`(I) regional educational laboratories supported under section 405(d)(4)(A)(i) of the General Education Provisions Act;
`(II) curriculum centers assisted under section 251(a)(8) of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act; and
`(III) other educational and training entities that provide relevant technical assistance;
`(E) collect and disseminate information to Federal, State, and local entities with respect to literacy methods that show great promise (including effective methods of assessment, effective literacy programs, and other information obtained through research or practice relating to adult and family learning that would increase the capacity and quality of literacy programs in the United States), using a variety of methods to ensure that the best information is received by State and local providers of literacy services;
`(F) review and make recommendations regarding--
`(i) ways to achieve uniformity among reporting requirements;
`(ii) the development of performance measures; and
`(iii) the development of standards for program effectiveness of literacy-related Federal programs; and
`(G) provide a toll-free long-distance telephone line for literacy providers and volunteers.
`(2) The Institute may enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, or make grants to, individuals, public or private nonprofit institutions, agencies, organizations, or consortia of such institutions, agencies, or organizations to carry

out the activities of the Institute. Such grants, contracts, or agreements shall be subject to the laws and regulations that generally apply to grants, contracts, or agreements entered into by Federal agencies.
'(e) LITERACY LEADERSHIP- (1) The Institute is, in consultation with the Board, authorized to award fellowships, with such stipends and allowances that the Director considers necessary, to outstanding individuals pursuing careers in adult education or literacy in the areas of instruction, management, research, or innovation.
'(2) Fellowships awarded under this subsection shall be used, under the auspices of the Institute, to engage in research, education, training, technical assistance, or other activities to advance the field of adult education or literacy, including the training of volunteer literacy providers at the national, State, or local level.
'(3) Individuals receiving fellowships pursuant to this subsection shall be known as 'Literacy Leader Fellows'.
'(f) NATIONAL INSTITUTE BOARD- (1)(A) There is established the National Institute Board (in this section referred to as the 'Board'). The Board shall consist of 10 individuals appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate from individuals who--
'(i) are not otherwise officers or employees of the Federal Government;
'(ii) are representative of entities or groups described in subparagraph (B); and
'(iii) are chosen from recommendations made to the President by individuals who represent such entities or groups.
'(B) Entities or groups described in this subparagraph are--
'(i) literacy organizations and providers of literacy services, including--
'(I) providers of literacy services receiving assistance under this Act; and
'(II) nonprofit providers of literacy services;
'(ii) businesses that have demonstrated interest in literacy programs;
'(iii) literacy students;
'(iv) experts in the area of literacy research;
'(v) State and local governments; and
'(vi) organized labor.
'(2) The Board shall--
'(A) make recommendations concerning the appointment of the Director and staff of the Institute;
'(B) provide independent advice on the operation of the Institute; and
'(C) receive reports from the Interagency Group and the Director.
'(3) The Interagency Group may carry out the duties of the Board until the expiration of the 180-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of the National Literacy Act of 1991.
'(4) Except as otherwise provided, the Board established by this subsection shall be subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.
'(5)(A) Each member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of 3 years. Any such member may be appointed for not more than 2 consecutive terms.
'(B) Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the member's predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term. A member may serve after the expiration of that members' term until a successor has taken office. A vacancy in the Board shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made. A vacancy in the Board shall not affect the powers of the Board.
'(6) A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may hold hearings. Any recommendation may be passed only by a majority of its members present.
'(7) The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board shall be elected by the members. The term of office of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be 2 years.
'(8) The Board shall meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of its members.
'(g) GIFTS, BEQUESTS, AND DEVISES- The Institute and the Board may accept (but not solicit), use, and dispose of gifts, bequests, or devises of services or property, both real and personal, for the purpose of aiding or facilitating the work of the Institute or the Board, respectively. Gifts, bequests, or devises of money and proceeds from sales of other property received as gifts, bequests, or devises shall be deposited in the Treasury and shall be available for disbursement upon order of the Institute or the Board, respectively.
'(h) MAILS- The Board and the Institute may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.
'(i) STAFF- The Interagency Group, after considering recommendations made by the Board, shall appoint and fix the pay of a Director.
'(j) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE LAWS- The Director and staff of the Institute may be appointed without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and may be paid without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates, except that an individual so appointed may not receive pay in excess of the annual rate of basic pay payable for GS-18 of the General Schedule.
'(k) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS- The Board and the Institute may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.
'(l) REPORT- The Institute shall submit a report to the Congress in each of the first 2 years in which it receives assistance under this section, and shall submit a report biennially thereafter. Each report submitted under this subsection shall include--
'(1) a comprehensive and detailed description of the Institute's operations, activities, financial condition, and accomplishments in the field of literacy for such fiscal year;

`(2) a description of how plans for the operation of the Institute for the succeeding fiscal year will facilitate achievement of the goals of the Institute and the goals of the literacy programs within the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services; and
`(3) any additional minority, or dissenting views submitted by members of the Board.
`(m) NONDUPLICATION- The Institute shall not duplicate any functions carried out by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) or (b). This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit the Secretary from delegating such functions to the Institute.
`(n) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS- (1) There are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of operating the Institute established by subsection (c) $15,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995.
`(2) Any amounts appropriated to the Secretary, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, or any other department that participates in the Institute for purposes that the Institute is authorized to perform under this section may be provided to the Institute for such purposes.'....

TITLE II--WORKFORCE LITERACY

SEC. 201. NATIONAL WORKFORCE LITERACY ASSISTANCE COLLABORATIVE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT- There is established in the Department of Labor a National Workforce Literacy Assistance Collaborative (in this subsection referred to as the `Collaborative') to improve the basic skills of individuals, especially those individuals who are marginally employed or unemployed with low basic skills and limited opportunity for long-term employment and advancement, by assisting small- and medium-sized businesses, business associations that represent small- and medium-sized businesses, and labor organizations to develop and implement literacy programs tailored to the needs of the workforce.
(b) FUNCTIONS- The Collaborative shall--
(1) develop and implement a plan for providing small- and medium-sized businesses with the technical assistance required to address the literacy needs of their workforce;
(2) monitor the development of workforce literacy training programs and identify best practices and successful small- and medium-sized business program models;
(3) inform businesses and unions of research findings and best practices regarding exemplary curricula, instructional techniques, training models, and the use of technology as a training tool in the workplace;
(4) provide technical assistance to help businesses assess individual worker literacy skill needs, implement workforce literacy training programs, and evaluate training program effectiveness;
(5) promote cooperation and coordination among State and local agencies and the private sector to obtain maximum uses of existing literacy and basic skills training resources;
(6) conduct regional and State small business workforce literacy meetings to increase program effectiveness and accountability;
(7) establish cooperative arrangements with the National Institute for Literacy and other centers involved in literacy and basic skills research and development activities; and
(8) prepare and produce written and video materials necessary to support technical assistance and information dissemination efforts.
(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS- There are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out this section $5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995.

SEC. 202. GRANTS FOR NATIONAL WORKFORCE LITERACY STRATEGIES.

Section 371 of the Adult Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1211) is amended--
(1) in subsection (a)--
(A) in paragraph (1), by inserting after `Secretary' the following: `, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration,';
(B) in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2)--
(i) by striking `and' and inserting a comma; and
(ii) by inserting after `local educational agencies' the following: `, and other entities described in paragraph (1) that receive grants under this subsection'; and
(C) by adding at the end the following:
`(5) In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall give priority to applications from partnerships that include small businesses.
`(6) The Secretary is authorized to award grants under this section for a period not to exceed 3 years.';
(2) in subsection (b)--
(A) in paragraph (1), by striking `subsection (c)' and inserting `subsection (e)';
(B) in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (2)--
(i) by striking `and' the first place it appears and inserting a comma; and
(ii) by inserting after `local educational agencies' the following: `, and other entities described in paragraph (1) that receive grants under this subsection'; and
(C) in paragraph (7), by amending subparagraph (B) to read as follows:
`(B) From the sum appropriated for each fiscal year under subsection (c) for any fiscal year in which appropriations equal or exceed $50,000,000, the Secretary shall allot to each State (as defined in section 312(7)) an amount proportionate to the amount such State receives under section 313.';
(3) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (e);

(4) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:
'(c) GRANT FOR NATIONAL WORKFORCE LITERACY STRATEGIES- (1) In any fiscal year in which amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization contained in subsection (e) equal or exceed $25,000,000, the Secretary shall reserve not more than $5,000,000 to establish a program of grants to facilitate the design and implementation of national strategies to assist unions, unions in collaboration with programs eligible for assistance under this Act and businesses, and small- and medium-sized businesses to effectively provide literacy and basic skills training to workers.
'(2) Grants awarded under this subsection shall pay the Federal share of the cost of programs to establish large-scale national strategies in workforce literacy, which may include the following activities:
'(A) Basic skills training that is--
'(i) cost-effective;
'(ii) needed by employees; and
'(iii) required by employers to establish a trainable workforce that can take advantage of further job specific training and advance the productivity of the labor force on an individual, industry, or national level.
'(B) Specific program offerings, which may include--
'(i) English as a second language instruction;
'(ii) communications skill building;
'(iii) interpersonal skill building;
'(iv) reading and writing skill building; and
'(v) computation and problem solving.
'(C) Appropriate assessments of the literacy and basic skills needs of individual workers and the skill levels required by business.
'(D) Cooperative arrangements with other organizations involved in providing literacy and basic skills training, including adult education organizations, vocational education organizations, community and junior colleges, community-based organizations, State level agencies, and private industry councils.
'(E) The establishment as appropriate of technology-based learning environments, such as computer-based learning centers.
'(3) Any partnership described in subsection (a)(1) that desires to receive a grant under this subsection shall submit a proposal to the Secretary. The proposal shall contain a plan specifying a strategy for designing and implementing workforce literacy and basic skills training for workers, and justifying the national, statewide, or industry-wide importance of this strategy. The proposal shall include--
'(A) a demonstration of need for literacy and basic skills training;
'(B) a description of the business or industry for which the strategy is to be established;
'(C) a statement of specific, measurable goals and participant outcomes;
'(D) a strategy for achieving the goals, including a description of the process to identify literacy and basic skills required by employers and the skills of individual workers, and a description of the specific services to be provided; and
'(E) a description of the costs of the activities to be undertaken.
'(4) The Secretary shall develop a formal process for the submission of proposals and publish an announcement in the Federal Register with respect to that process and the availability of grants under this subsection.
'(5) The Federal share of the cost of a program assisted under this subsection shall not exceed 70 percent.
'(6) The Secretary shall give priority for grants under this subsection to proposals to carry out activities described in paragraph (2)(D).
'(7) In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary may consider geographic factors, such as rural and urban areas and national distribution.
'(8) Of the grants awarded under this subsection each year, not less than 5 shall each be for an amount that is not less than $500,000.
'(d) EVALUATION- The Secretary shall reserve not more than 2 percent of any amount appropriated pursuant to the authorization contained in subsection (e) for the purpose of carrying out an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of programs assisted under this section in improving the literacy and basic skills of workers and the productivity of employees, including potential for the replicability or adaption of such programs.'; and
(5) in subsection (e) (as redesignated by paragraph (3)) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:
'(1) There are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out this section such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal year 1991, $60,000,000 for the fiscal year 1992, and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1993, 1994, and 1995.'....

'SEC. 1059. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

'There are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out this part such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal year 1991, $100,000,000 for the fiscal year 1992, and such sums as may be necessary for the fiscal year 1993.'.

SEC. 304. FAMILY LITERACY PUBLIC BROADCASTING PROGRAM.

(a) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED- (1) The Secretary is authorized, subject to the availability of appropriations, to enter into a contract with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to arrange for the production and dissemination of family literacy programming and accompanying materials which would assist parents in improving family literacy skills and language development. In producing and developing such programming, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting shall work in cooperation with local public broadcasting stations to avoid duplication of efforts.
(2) After the program described in paragraph (1) is produced, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting shall arrange to have audio and video instructional media materials for distribution at sites chosen from among--

(A) State and local libraries operating literacy programs, and
(B) nonprofit entities serving hard-to-serve populations as defined in section 304(b)(2), including community-based organizations, volunteer organizations and other non-governmental entities.
(3) The audio and video instructional media materials described in paragraph (2) shall be used at sites described in paragraph (2), and on a loan basis, distributed to families.
(4) One year after distribution of the audio and video instructional media materials, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting shall report to the Congress on the distribution and use of the audio and video instructional media materials produced pursuant to this subsection and such audio and video instructional media materials' contribution in promoting literacy.
(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS- There are authorized to be appropriated $2,000,000 for fiscal year 1992 to carry out the provisions of subsection (i), of which $100,000 shall be reserved for reproducing and distributing programming or audio and video instructional media materials.

TITLE V--BOOKS FOR FAMILIES
SEC. 501. INEXPENSIVE BOOK DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM.
(a) PRIORITY- Section 1563(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 2963) is amended by--
(1) striking 'and' at the end of paragraph (2);
(2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and
(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:
'(3) in the fiscal year 1991 and each succeeding fiscal year, the contractor will give priority in the selection of additional local programs to programs and projects which serve children and students with special needs including, at a minimum--
'(A) low-income children (particularly such children in high poverty areas);
'(B) children at risk for school failure;
'(C) children with disabilities;
'(D) emotionally disturbed children;
'(E) foster children;
'(F) homeless children;
'(G) migrant children;
'(H) children without access to libraries;
'(I) institutionalized or incarcerated children; and
'(J) children whose parents are institutionalized or incarcerated; and'.
(b) STUDY- The contractor shall report to the Secretary of Education annually regarding the number and description of the additional programs funded under subsection 1563(a)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

SEC. 502. LIBRARY LITERACY PROGRAMS.
Section 601 of the Library Services and Construction Act (20 U.S.C. 375) is amended by inserting at the end thereof the following new subsection:
'(f) In awarding grants under this section the Secretary shall give priority to programs and services which--
'(1) will be delivered in areas of greatest need which have highest concentrations of adults who do not have a secondary education or its equivalent, and which--
'(A) have few community or financial resources to establish the program described under this section without Federal assistance, or
'(B) have low per capita income, unemployment or underemployment; and
'(2) coordinate with literacy organizations and community based organizations providing literacy services.'.

TITLE VI--LITERACY FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS
SEC. 601. MANDATORY LITERACY PROGRAM.
(a) ESTABLISHMENT- The chief correctional officer of each State correctional system may establish a demonstration or system-wide functional literacy program.
(b) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS- (1) To qualify for funding under subsection (d), each functional literacy program shall--
(A) to the extent possible, make use of advanced technologies; and
(B) include--
(i) a requirement that each person incarcerated in the system, jail, or detention center who is not functionally literate, except a person described in paragraph (2), shall participate in the program until the person--
(I) achieves functional literacy or in the case of an individual with a disability, achieves a level of functional literacy commensurate with his or her ability;
(II) is granted parole;
(III) completes his or her sentence; or
(IV) is released pursuant to court order;
(ii) a prohibition on granting parole to any person described in clause (i) who refuses to participate in the program, unless the State parole board determines that the prohibition should be waived in a particular case; and

(iii) adequate opportunities for appropriate education services and the screening and testing of all inmates for functional literacy and disabilities affecting functional literacy, including learning disabilities, upon arrival in the system or at the jail or detention center.
(2) The requirement of paragraph (1)(B) shall not apply to a person who--
(A) is serving a life sentence without possibility of parole;
(B) is terminally ill; or
(C) is under a sentence of death.
(c) ANNUAL REPORT- (1) Within 90 days after the close of the first calendar year in which a literacy program authorized by subsection (a) is placed in operation, and annually for each of the 4 years thereafter, the chief correction officer of each State correctional system shall submit a report to the Attorney General with respect to its literacy program.
(2) A report under paragraph (1) shall disclose--
(A) the number of persons who were tested for eligibility during the preceding year;
(B) the number of persons who were eligible for the literacy program during the preceding year;
(C) the number of persons who participated in the literacy program during the preceding year;
(D) the names and types of tests that were used to determine functional literacy and the names and types of testing that were used to determine disabilities affecting functional literacy;
(E) the average number of hours of instruction that were provided per week and the average number per student during the preceding year;
(F) sample data on achievement of participants in the program, including the number of participants who achieved functional literacy;
(G) data on all direct and indirect costs of the program; and
(H) a plan for implementing a system-wide mandatory functional literacy program, as required by subsection (b), and, if appropriate, information on progress toward such a program.
(d) COMPLIANCE GRANTS- (1) The Attorney General shall make grants to State correctional agencies who elect to establish a program described in subsection (a) for the purpose of assisting in carrying out the programs, developing the plans, and submitting the reports required by this section.
(2) A State corrections agency is eligible to receive a grant under this subsection if the agency agrees to provide to the Attorney General--
(A) such data as the Attorney General may request concerning the cost and feasibility of operating the mandatory functional literacy programs required by subsections (a) and (b); and
(B) a detailed plan outlining the methods by which the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) will be met, including specific goals and timetables.
(3) There are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of carrying out this section $10,000,000 for fiscal year 1992, $15,000,000 for fiscal year 1993, $20,000,000 for fiscal year 1994, and $25,000,000 for fiscal year 1995.
(e) DEFINITION- For the purposes of this section, the term `functional literacy' means at least an eighth grade equivalence in reading on a nationally recognized standardized test.

SEC. 602. BLUE RIBBON AWARDS FOR CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.
(a) IN GENERAL- Section 1566 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 2966) is amended--
(1) in subsection (a), by striking `The' and inserting `Subject to subsection (d), the'; and
(2) by adding at the end the following:
`(d) BLUE RIBBON AWARDS FOR CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS- The Secretary, through nominations provided by the Office on Correctional Education after consultation with representatives of correctional education organizations and others active in literacy education, shall annually make 1 or more awards under this section to effective and innovative programs for inmate education and literacy.'.
(b) EFFECTIVE DATE- The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 1992.

TITLE VII--VOLUNTEERS FOR LITERACY
SEC. 701. LITERACY CHALLENGE GRANTS.
(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY-
(1) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED- Part C of title I of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4991 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:
`LITERACY CHALLENGE GRANTS
`SEC. 125. (a) The Director is authorized to award challenge grants to eligible public agencies and private organizations to pay the Federal share of the costs of establishing, operating or expanding community or employee literacy programs or projects that include the use of full-time or part-time volunteers as one method of addressing illiteracy.
`(b) Each eligible organization desiring a grant under this section shall submit to the ACTION Agency an application in such form and accompanied by such information as the Director may reasonably require. Each such application shall--
`(1) describe the activities for which assistance is sought,
`(2) contain assurances that the eligible organization will provide from non-Federal sources the non-Federal share of the cost of the program or project,
`(3) provide assurances, satisfactory to the Director, that the literacy project will be operated in cooperation with other public and private agencies and organizations interested in, and qualified to, combat illiteracy in the community where the project is to be conducted, and
`(4) contain such other information and assurances as the Director may reasonably require.

`(c)(1)(A) The Federal share of the cost of a program or project authorized by this section administered by a public agency, a nonprofit organization other than an organization described in paragraph (2), or a private, for-profit organization shall not exceed--
`(i) 80 percent in the first fiscal year;
`(ii) 70 percent in the second fiscal year; and
`(iii) 60 percent in the third fiscal year.
`(B) The non-Federal share paid by a private, for-profit organization shall be in cash.
`(2) The Federal share of the cost of a program or project administered by a nonprofit or community-based organization shall not exceed--
`(A) 90 percent in the first fiscal year;
`(B) 80 percent in the second fiscal year; and
`(C) 70 percent in the third fiscal year.
`(3) The non-Federal share provided by a public agency or a nonprofit or community-based organization may be provided in cash, or in kind, fairly evaluated, and may include the use of plant, equipment, and services.'.
(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT- The table of contents contained in the first section of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4951 note) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 124 the following new item.
`Sec. 125. Literacy challenge grants.'.
(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS- Section 501(c) of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 5081(c)) is amended--
(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;
(2) by inserting `(1)' after the subsection designation; and
(3) by inserting at the end the following:
`(2) Except as provided in paragraph (3) and in addition to the amounts authorized to be appropriated pursuant to paragraph (1) there is authorized to be appropriated $2,500,000 for the fiscal year 1992 and such sums as may be necessary for 1993 for Literacy Challenge Grants under section 125.
`(3) No funds shall be appropriated pursuant to paragraph (2) in any fiscal year unless--
`(A) the funds available in such fiscal year for the VISTA Program under part A of title I are sufficient to provide the years of volunteer service specified for such fiscal year under section 501(d)(1) for the VISTA Program; and
`(B) the funds available in such fiscal year for the VISTA Literacy Corps under part A of title I are sufficient to provide at least the same years of volunteer service as were provided in the fiscal year preceding such fiscal year.'....

Speaker of the House of Representatives.
Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.
END

APPENDIX 2

CASE STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Key issues/questions:

- Motivation: What are the drivers for integrating literacy?
- Barriers: What hinders industries from integrating literacy?
- Benefits: What are the outcomes of integrating literacy?

For interviews with workers:

Motivation:

Why did you decide to participate in this literacy programme?
What do you want to get out of it?

Barriers:

Was it easy to get involved, or did it take some effort?
Did you have any reservations about participating? If so, what were they?

Benefits:

Has this programme helped you? Why or why not? If yes, how has it helped you?
If no, what should be done differently to make it useful?
Has it helped you do your job better?
Has participating in this programme helped you to go on to other training?
If so, how?
Have the skills you've learned here affected other areas of your life, such as helping your kids/family or getting more involved in your community?
Have you ever recommended this programme to a colleague? Why or why not?
What ideas do you have for improving your workplace literacy programme?

Other:

Were you or any of your colleagues involved in developing the programme? If so, how?

From interviews with management:

Motivation:

Why did you decide to create this literacy programme?
What do you hope your company will get out of it?

Barriers:

Was it easy to create or did it take some effort?
How is it funded?
Did you have any reservations about it? If so, what were they?
How did you get the programme started? Did you have difficulty getting it started?
What were the obstacles? How did you overcome them?
Were any of your employees involved in developing it?

Benefits:

Has the company benefited from having a workplace literacy programme? If so, how? If not, why not?
Are employees who participate in the literacy programme going on to further training/getting more out of further training?
What do you see as the future of this programme?

Other:

Is the literacy programme integrated with employees' jobs? If so, how?
Have you encountered a stigma about literacy? If so, how have you dealt with it?

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